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PRIMER

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

CHAPTER I.

WRITERS BEFORE THE NORMAN CONQUEST, **670—1066.**

1. Continental Poems.—*The Traveller's Song.*—*Deor's Complaint. The Fight at Finnesburg.*—*Beowulf,* before **600.**
2. Poems in England.—Cædmon's *Paraphrase,* **670.**—*Judith.*—Cynewulf's *Poems,* and others in Exeter and Vercelli books.—*Odes* in A. S. Chronicle.—*Song of Brunanburh,* **937.**—*Fight at Maldon,* **991.**
3. PROSE.—Bæda's *translation of St. John,* **735.**—King Ælfred's *work during his two times of peace,* **880—893** and **897—901.**—Ælfric's *prose works,* **990—995.**—Wulfstan's *work,* **1002—1023.**—*The English Chronicle,* ends **1154.**

1. **The History of English Literature** is the story of what great English men and women thought and felt, and then wrote down in good prose and beautiful poetry in the English language. The story is a long one. It begins in England about the year 670, it begins still earlier on the Continent, in the old Angle-Land, and it is still going on in the year 1879. Into this little book then is to be put the story of more than 1,200 years of the thoughts, feelings, and imagination of a great people. Every English man and woman has good reason to be proud of the work done by their forefathers in prose and poetry. Every

one who can write a good book or a good song may say to himself, "I belong to a noble company, which has been teaching and delighting the world for more than 1,000 years." And that is a fact in which those who write and those who read English literature ought to feel a noble pride.

2. **The English and the Welsh.**—This literature is written in English, the tongue of our fathers. They lived, while this island of ours was still called Britain, in Sleswick, Jutland, and Holstein; but, either because they were pressed from the inland, or for pure love of adventure, they took to the sea, and, landing at various parts of Britain at various times, drove back, after 150 years of hard fighting, the Britons, whom they called Welsh, to the land now called Wales, and to Cornwall. It is well for those who study English literature to remember that in these two places the Britons remained as a distinct race with a distinct literature of their own, because the stories and the poetry of the Britons crept afterwards into English literature and had a great influence upon it. The whole tale of King Arthur, of which English poetry and even English prose is so full, was a British tale. The imaginative work of the conquered afterwards took captive their fierce conquerors.

3. **The English Tongue.**—Of the language in which our literature is written we can say little here; it is fully discussed in the Primer of English Grammar. Of course it has changed its look very much since it began to be written. The earliest form of our English tongue is very different from modern English in form, pronunciation, and appearance, and one must learn it almost as if it were a foreign tongue; but still the language written in the year 700 is the same as that in which the prose of the Bible is written, just as much as the tree planted a hundred years ago is the same tree to-day. It is this sameness of language, as well as the sameness of national spirit,

which makes our literature one literature for 1,200 years.

4. **Old English Poetry** was also different in form from what it is now. It was not written in rime, nor were its syllables counted. Its essential elements were accent and alliteration.[1] Every long verse is divided into two half verses by a pause, and has four accented syllables, while the number of unaccented syllables is indifferent. These half verses are linked together by alliteration. Two accented syllables in the first half, and one in the second, begin with vowels (generally different vowels) or with the same consonant. Here is one example from a war song :—

"*W*igu *w*intrum geong	*W*ordum mælde.
Warrior of winters young	With words spake."

There is often only one alliterative letter in the first half verse. Sometimes there are more accents than four, but for the most part they do not exceed five in an ordinary long line. Sometimes in subjects requiring a more solemn or a more passionate treatment a metre is used in which unaccented syllables are regularly introduced, and the number of accented syllables also increased, and there are instances in which terminal rimes are employed. The metres are therefore varied, though not arbitrarily. But however they are varied, they are built on the simple original type of four accents and three alliterative syllables.

The emphasis of the words depends on the thought. Archaic forms and words are used, and metaphorical phrases and compound words, such as *war-adder* for arrow, or the *whale's-path* for the sea, or *gold-friend of men* for king. A great deal of parallelism, such as we find in early poetry, prevails. The same statement or thought is repeated twice in different words. "Then

[1] See, for the whole of this, Mr. Sweet's *Anglo-Saxon Reader*, p. xcviii. Clarendon Press Series.

saw they the sea head lands, the windy walls." The poetry is nevertheless very concise and direct. Much more attention is paid to the goodness of the matter than to the form. Things are said in the shortest way; there are scarcely any similes, and the metaphorical expressions are rare. We see in this the English character.

After the Norman conquest there gradually crept in a French system of rimes and of metres and accent, which we find full-grown in Chaucer's works. But unrimed and alliterative verse lasted in poetry to the reign of John, was revived in the days of Edward III. and Richard II., and alliteration was blended with rime up to the sixteenth century. The latest form of it occurs in Scotland.

5. **The First English Poems.**—Our forefathers, while as yet they were heathen and lived on the Continent, made poems, and of this *Continental poetry* we possess a few remains. The earliest perhaps is the *Song of the Traveller*, written, it seems likely, in the fifth century by a man who had lived in the fourth. It is not much more than a catalogue of names and of the places whither the minstrel went with the Goths; but where he expands, he shows so pleasant a pride in his profession, that he wins our sympathy. *Deor's Complaint* is another of these poems. The writer is a bard at the court of the Heodenings, from whom his foe takes by craft his goods. He writes this complaint to comfort his heart. "Weland (the great smith of the Eddas) and the kings of the Goths suffered and bore their weird, and so may I. The All-wise Lord of the World worketh many changes." This is the general argument, and it is the first touch of the sad fatalism which belongs to English poetry. *The Fight at Finnesburg* is the third fragment. It tells of the attack on Fin's palace in Friesland, and the whole story of which it is a part is alluded to in *Beowulf*. Of all the Old

English battle descriptions, it is the most full of the fire and fierceness of war, and it completes, with two fragments of the epic of *Waldhere*, and with *Beowulf*, the list of the English poetry written on the Continent.

6. **Beowulf** is our Old English epic, and it recounts the great deeds and death of Beowulf. It may have been written before the English conquest of Britain, in the fifth century. The scenery is laid among the Goths of Sweden and the Danes, and there is no mention of our England. It was probably wrought into an epic out of short poems about the hero, and as we have it, was edited, with Christian elements introduced into it, by a Northumbrian poet, probably in the eighth century.

The story is of Hrothgar, one of the kingly race of Jutland, who builds his hall, Heorot, near the sea, on the edge of the moorland. A monster called Grendel, half-human, half-fiend, dwells in the moor close to the sea, and hating the festive noise, carries off thirty of the thanes of Hrothgar and devours them. After twelve years of this misery, Beowulf, thane of Hygelac, sails from Sweden to bring help to Hrothgar, and at night, when Grendel breaks into the hall, wrestles with him, and tears away his arm, and the fiend flies away to die. His mother avenges his death the next night, and Beowulf descends into her sea-cave and slays her also, and then returns to Hygelac. The second part of the poem opens with Beowulf as king in his own land, ruling well, until a fire-drake, who guards a treasure, is robbed and comes from his den to harry and burn the country. The old king goes forth then to fight his last fight, slays the dragon, but dies of its fiery breath, and the poem closes with the tale of his burial, burned on a lofty pyre on the top of Hronesnæs.

Its social interest lies in what it tells us of the manners and customs of our forefathers before they came

to England. Their mode of life in peace and war is described; their ships, their towns, the scenery in which they lived, their feasts, amusements—we have the account of a whole day from morning to night—their women and the reverence given them, the way in which they faced death, in which they sang, in which they gave gifts and rewards. And the whole is told with Homeric directness and simplicity. A deep fatalism broods over it, but a manly spirit fills the fatalism. "Sorrow not," says Beowulf to Hrothgar, "it is better for every man to avenge his friend than to mourn greatly. Each of us must abide his end. Let him who can, work high deeds ere he die. So, when he lies lifeless, it will be best for the warrior." Out of the fatalism naturally grows the stern and simple pathos of the poem. It is most poetical in the quick force with which the story is realised and pictured, and in its grave truth to humanity. The descriptions of the sea and of wild nature are instinct with the same spirit which fills our modern poetry, and there still lingers among us that nature worship of our fathers which in Beowulf made dreadful and lonely places seem dwelt in—as if the places had a spirit—by monstrous beings. In the creation of Grendel and his mother, the savage stalkers of the moor, that half-natural, half-supernatural world began, which, when men grew gentler and the country more cultivated, became so beautiful as fairyland. Here is the description of the dwelling-place of Grendel:—

"Dark is the land
Where they dwell: windy nesses, and holds of the wolf:
The wild path of the fen where the stream of the wood
Through the fog of the sea-cliffs falls downward in flood.
'Neath the earth is the flood, and not further from here
Than one metes out a mile, is the marsh of the moor,
And the trees o'er it waving outreach and hang over;
And root fast is the wood that the water o'erhelms.
There the wonder is great that one shuddering sees
Every night in the flood is a fire."

The whole poem, Pagan as it is, is English to its very root. It is sacred to us, our Genesis, the book of our origins.

7. **Christianity and English Poetry.**—When we came to Britain we were great warriors and great sea pirates—"sea wolves," as a Roman poet calls us; and all our poetry down to the present day is full of war, and still more of the sea. No nation has ever written so much sea-poetry. But we were more than mere warriors. We were a home-loving people when we got settled either in Sleswick or in England, and all our literature from the first writings to the last is full of domestic love, the dearness of home, and the ties of kinsfolk. We were a religious people, even as heathen, still more so when we became Christian, and our poetry is as much of religion as of war. With Christianity a new spirit entered into English poetry. The war spirit did not decay, but into the songs steals a softer element. The fatalism is modified by the faith that the fate is the will of a good God. The pathos is not less, but it is relieved by an onlook of joy. The triumph over enemies is not less exulting, but even more, for it is the triumph of God over His foes that is sung by Cædmon and Cynewulf. Nor is the imaginative delight in legends and in the supernatural less. But it is now found in the legends of the saints, in the miracles and visions that Bæda tells of the Christian heroes, in fantastic allegories of spiritual things, like the poems of the *Phœnix* and the *Whale*. The love of nature lasted, but it dwells now rather on gentle than on savage scenery. The human sorrow for the hardness of life is more tender, and when the poems speak of the love of home, it is with an added grace. One little bit still lives for us out of the older world. "Dear is the welcome guest to the Frisian wife when the vessel strands; the ship is come and her husband to his house, her own provider. And she welcomes him in, washes his weedy garment, and

clothes him anew. It is pleasant on shore to him whom his love awaits." If that was the soft note of home in a pagan land, it was softer still when Christianity had mellowed manners. Yet, with all this, the faith of Woden still influences the Christian song. Christ, is not only the Saviour, but the Hero who goes forth against the dragon. His overthrow of the fiends is described in much the same terms as that of Beowulf's wrestling with Grendel. "Bitterly grim, gripped them in his wrath." The death of Christ, at which the universe trembles and weeps, is like the death of Balder. The old poetry penetrated the new, but the spirit of the new transformed that of the old.

8. **Cædmon.**—The poem of Beowulf has the grave Teutonic power, but it is not native to our soil. It is not the first true English poem. That is the work of CÆDMON, and it was made in Northumbria. The story of it, as told by Bæda, proves that the making of songs was common at the time. Cædmon was a servant to the monastery of Hild, an abbess of royal blood, at Whitby in Yorkshire. He was somewhat aged when the gift of song came to him, and he knew nothing of the art of verse, so that at the feasts when for the sake of mirth all sang in turn he left the table. One night, having done so and gone to the stables, for he had care of the cattle, he fell asleep, and One came to him in vision and said, "Cædmon, sing me some song." And he answered, "I cannot sing; for this cause I left the feast and came hither." Then said the other, "However, you shall sing." "What shall I sing?" he replied. "Sing the beginning of created things," answered the other. Whereupon he began to sing verses to the praise of God, and, awaking, remembered what he had sung, and added more in verse worthy of God. In the morning he came to the steward, and told him of the gift he had received, and, being brought to Hild, was ordered

to tell his dream before learned men, that they might give judgment whence his verses came. And when they had heard, they all said that heavenly grace had been conferred on him by our Lord.

9. **Cædmon's Poem**, written about 670, is for us the beginning of English poetry in England, and the story of its origin ought to be loved by us. Nor should we fail to reverence the place where it began. Above the small and land-locked harbour of Whitby, rises and juts out towards the sea the dark cliff where Hild's monastery stood, looking out over the German Ocean. It is a wild, wind-swept upland, and the sea beats furiously beneath, and standing there we feel that it is a fitting birthplace for the poetry of the sea-ruling nation. Nor is the verse of the first poet without the stormy note of the scenery among which it was written, nor without the love of the stars or the dread of the waste land that Cædmon saw from Whitby Head.

Cædmon paraphrased the history of the Old and New Testament. He sang the creation of the world, the history of Israel, the book of Daniel, the whole story of the life of Christ, future judgment, purgatory, hell, and heaven. All who heard it thought it divinely given. "Others after him," says Bæda, "tried to make religious poems, but none could vie with him, for he did not learn the art of poetry from men, nor of men, but from God."

The interest of the poem is not found in the telling of the Scripture story, but in those parts of it which are the invention of Cædmon, in the drawing of the characters, in the passages instinct with the genius of our race, and in those which reveal the individuality of the poet. The fall of the angels and the Hell, and the proud and angry cry of Satan against God from his bed of chains, are full of fierce war-rage, while the contrasts drawn between the peace of heaven and the swart horror of hell have the same kind of pathos as

Milton's work on the same subject. The pleasure of the northern imagination in swiftness and in joy is as well marked as its pleasure in wild freedom, in dark pride, and in revenge. The burst of fierce and joyous vengeance when the fiend succeeds in his temptation is magnificent. There is true dramatic power in the dialogue between Eve and Satan, and between Eve and Adam, and there is in the whole scene of the temptation a subtle quality of thought which we do not expect. It is characteristic of Old-England that the motives of the woman for eating the fruit are all good, and the passionate and tender conscientiousness of the scene of the repentance is equally characteristic of the gentler and religious side of the Teutonic character. "Dark and true and tender is the North." This is the really great part of the poem. The rest, with the exception of the Flood, the Battle of Abraham with Chedorlaomer, and the passage of the Red Sea, is so dull that I believe the work of the original poet was filled up by other hands.[1] However that may be, in this poem, our native English poetry begins with a religious poem, and it gave birth to many children.

10. **English Poetry after Cædmon** was partly secular, but chiefly religious. The secular poetry was sung about the country, but the increase of monasteries where men of letters lived, naturally made the written poetry religious. What remains is chiefly contained in two collections, the "Exeter Book" and the "Vercelli Book," both named from the places where the manuscripts now are preserved.

During the short period when literature flourished in the South at the end of the seventh century, English poetry is there connected with the name of EALDHELM. A young man when Cædmon died, and

[1] Sievers has lately tried to show ("conclusively," says Mr. Sweet) that a great portion of the *Paraphrase* is a translation from an old Saxon original, perhaps by the author of the *Heliand*.

afterwards Abbot of Malmesbury, he united the song-maker to the religious poet. He was a skilled musician, and it is said that he had not his equal in the making or singing of English verse. His songs were popular in King Ælfred's time, and a pretty story tells, that when the traders came into the town on the Sunday, he, in the character of a gleeman, stood on the bridge and sang them songs, with which he intermingled Scripture texts and teaching.

But the English poetry which died in the South grew rapidly in Northumbria after Cædmon's death. We do not know the date nor the writer of *Judith*, but it belongs to the best time. It was found in the same MS. as Beowulf, and of the twelve books in which it was originally written, we only possess the three last, which tell of the banquet of Holofernes, his death, and the attack of the Jews on the Assyrian camp. The language is carefully wrought, the verse varied and musical, the action dramatic, and swiftly brought to its conclusion. It is really a poem of war, and full of the fire of war.

11. **Cynewulf**, the greatest of these northern poets, has left us both secular and religious poems. His name is given in a few of the pieces in the Exeter and Vercelli books. But it is very probable that he was the writer of several of the anonymous poems. He seems to have been a minstrel at the court of one of the Northumbrian kings, and to have been exiled by one of the wars of the eighth century. He was then, he says, a frivolous and sinful man, and during this period he wrote the lyric pieces attributed to him. Of these the *Wanderer*, and the *Wife's Complaint*, and the *Ruin* (if we may allot this lovely fragment to him), are full of regret and yearning, in exile and solitude, for the lost beauty and happiness of his world, while the *Seafarer* breathes the same fascination for the sea which filled the veins of our forefathers while they sang and sailed, and which is

strangely re-echoed, even to the very note of Cynewulf's song, in Tennyson's *Sailor Boy*. The *Riddles*, of which this poet wrote a great number, show how closely and with what love he observed natural beauty. But a change came over him in his old age, and he devoted himself wholly to religious poetry. The *Dream of the Cross*, in which he tells the vision which wrought this change, is a piece of great beauty. It is prefixed to the *Elene*, or the *Finding of the Cross*, which with the *Crist* and the *Passion of St. Juliana*, are Cynewulf's hymns on the threefold coming of Christ. The evidence of style is relied on to attribute also to Cynewulf the *Life of St. Gudlac*, (two poems, on the Life and Death, put into one, the Life probably not by Cynewulf), the descriptive poem of the *Phœnix*, and the lyrics mentioned above. He may also have written the *Andreas*, which relates the adventures of St. Andrew among the cannibal Marmedonians.

Didactic and Gnomic Poems, metrical translations of the Psalms, and metrical hymns and prayers, fill up the rest of the Exeter and Vercelli books. One fine fragment in which Death speaks to man, and describes the low and hateful and doorless house of which he keeps the key, does not belong to these books, and with the few English verses Bæda made when he was dying, tells us how stern was the thought of our fathers about the grave. But stern as these fragments are, the Old-English religious poetry always passes on to dwell on a brighter world. Thus we are told, in the Ode in the Saxon Chronicle, that King Eadgar "left this weak life, and chose for himself another light, sweet and fair."

12. **The War Poetry of England** at this time in Northumbria was probably as plentiful as the religious, but it was not likely to be written down by the men of letters in the monasteries. It is only when literature travelled southwards in Ælfred's time, that

we find any written war songs, and of these there are only two, the *Song of Brunanburh*, 938, and the *Song of the Fight at Maldon*, 998. They are noble poems, the fitting sources, both in their short and rapid lines, and in their simplicity and force, of such war songs as the *Battle of the Baltic* and the *Charge of the Light Brigade*. The first, composed expressly for the *Chronicle*, and inserted in it instead of the usual prose entry, describes the fight of King Æthelstan with Anlaf the Dane. From morn till night they fought till they were "weary of red battle in the hard hand play," till five young kings and seven earls of Anlaf's host lay in that fighting place "quieted by swords," and the Northmen fled, and only "the screamers of war were left behind, the black raven and the eagle to feast on the white flesh, and the greedy battle-hawk, and the grey beast the wolf in the wood." The second is the story of the death of Brihtnoth, an ealdorman of Northumbria, in battle against the Danes. It contains 690 lines. In the speeches of heralds and warriors before the fight, in the speeches and single combats of the chiefs, in the loud laugh and mock which follow a good death-stroke, in the rapid rush of the verse when the battle is joined, the poem, though broken, as Homer's verse is not, is Homeric. In the rude chivalry which disdains to take vantage ground of the Danes, in the way in which the friends and churls of Brihtnoth die one by one, avenging their lord, keeping faithful the tie of kinship and clanship, in the cry not to yield a foot's breadth of earth, in the loving sadness with which home is spoken of, the poem is English to the core. And in the midst of it all, like a song from another land, but a song heard often in English fights from then till now, is the last prayer of the great earl, when dying he commends his soul with thankfulness to God.

Two short odes, among several small poems

inserted in the *Chronicle*, one on the deliverance of five cities from the Danes by King Eadmund, 942; and another on the coronation of King Eadgar, are the last records of a war poetry which naturally decayed when the English were trodden down by the Normans. When Taillefer rode into battle at Hastings, singing songs of Roland and Charlemagne, he sang more than the triumph of the Norman over the English; he sang the victory for a time of French Romance over Old-English poetry.

13. **Old English Prose.**—It is pleasant to think that I may not unfairly make English prose begin with BÆDA. He was born about A.D. 673, and was, like Cædmon, a Northumbrian. After 683, he spent his life at Jarrow, "in the same monastery," he says, "and while attentive to the rule of mine order, and the service of the Church, my constant pleasure lay in learning, or teaching, or writing." He enjoyed that pleasure for many years, for his quiet life was long, and his toil was unceasing from boyhood till he died. Forty-five works prove his industry; and their fame over the whole of learned Europe during his time proves their value. His learning was as various as it was great. All that the world then knew of science, music, rhetoric, medicine, arithmetic, astronomy, and physics were brought together by him; and his life was as gentle, and himself as loved, as his work was great. His books were written in Latin, and with these we have nothing to do, but his was the first effort to make English prose a literary language; for his last work was a *Translation of the Gospel of St. John*, as almost his last words were in English verse. In the story of his death told by his disciple Cuthbert is the first record of English prose writing. When the last day came, the dying man called his scholars to him that he might dictate more of his translation. "There is still a chapter wanting," said the scribe, "and it is hard for thee to question thyself longer." "It is easily

done," said Bæda, "take thy pen and write quickly." Through the day they wrote, and when evening fell, "There is yet one sentence unwritten, dear master," said the youth. "Write it quickly," said the master. "It is finished now." "Thou sayest truth," was the reply, "all is finished now." He sang the "Glory to God" and died. It is to that scene that English prose looks back as its sacred source, as it is in the greatness and variety of Bæda's Latin work that English literature strikes its key-note.

14. **Ælfred's Work.**—When Bæda died, Northumbria was the home of prose literature. Though as yet written mostly in Latin, it was a wide-spread literature. Wilfrid of York and Benedict Biscop had founded libraries, and established far and wide a number of monastic schools. Six hundred scholars gathered round Bæda ere he died, and Alcuin, a pupil of Egbert, Archbishop of York, carried in 782 to the court of Charles the Great the learning and piety of England. But the northern literature began to decay towards the end of the eighth century, and after 866 it was, we may say, blotted out by the Danes. The long battle with these invaders was lost in Northumbria, but it was gained for a time by Ælfred the Great in Wessex; and with Ælfred's literary work, learning changed its seat from the north to the south. Ælfred's writings and translations, being in English and not in Latin, make him, since Bæda's work is lost, the true father of English prose. As Whitby is the cradle of English poetry, so is Winchester of English prose. At Winchester the King took the English tongue and made it the tongue in which history, philosophy, law and religion spoke to the English people. No work was ever done more eagerly or more practically. He brought scholars from different parts of the world. He set up schools in his monasteries "where every free-born youth, who has the means, shall attend to his book till he can read

English writing perfectly." He presided over a school in his own court. He made himself a master of a literary English style, and he did this that he might teach his people. He translated the popular manuals of the time into English, but he edited them with large additions of his own, needful as he thought, for English use. He gave his nation moral philosophy in Boethius's *Consolations of Philosophy;* a universal history, with geographical chapters of his own,[1] in the *History of Orosius;* a history of England in *Bæda's History*, giving to some details a West-Saxon form; and a religious handbook in the *Pastoral Rule* of Pope Gregory. We do not quite know whether he worked himself at the *English* or *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, but at least it was in his reign that this chronicle rose out of meagre lists into a full narrative of events. To him, then, we English look back as the father of English prose literature.

15. **The Later Old English Prose.**—The impulse he gave soon fell away, but it was revived under King Eadgar the Peaceful, whose seventeen years of government (958-75) were the most prosperous and glorious of the West-Saxon Empire. Under him Æthelwald, Bishop of Winchester, made it his work to keep up English schools and to translate Latin works into English, and Archbishop Dunstan carried out the same pursuits with his own vigorous intelligence. Æthelwald's school sent out from it a scholar and abbot named ÆLFRIC. He is the first large translator of the Bible, turning into English the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, and part of Job. The rest of his numerous works are some of the best models we possess of the simple literary English of the beginning of the eleventh century. The

[1] *The Voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan*, original insertions of Ælfred into Orosius' History, will be found in Mr. Sweet's *Anglo-Saxon Reader*. They are "of the highest literary and philological value as specimens of the natural prose of Ælfred."

Homilies we owe to him, and his *Lives of the Saints* are written in a classic prose, and his *Colloquy*, afterwards edited by another Ælfric, may be called the first English-Latin dictionary. But this revival had no sooner begun to take root than the Northmen came again in force upon the land and conquered it. We have in Wulfstan's (Archbishop of York, 1002-23) *Address to the English*, a terrible picture, written in impassioned prose, of the demoralisation caused by the inroads of the Danes. During the long interweaving of Danes and English together under Danish kings from 1013 to 1042, no English literature arose. It was towards the quiet reign of Edward the Confessor it again began to live. But no sooner was it born than the Norman invasion repressed, but did not quench its life.

16. **The English Chronicle.**—One great monument, however, of old English prose lasts beyond the Conquest. It is the English Chronicle, and in it our literature is continuous from Ælfred to Stephen. At first it was nothing but a record of the births and deaths of bishops and kings, and was probably a West-Saxon Chronicle. Among these short notices there is, however, one tragic story, of Cynewulf and Cyneheard, 755, so rude in style, and so circumstantial, that it is probably contemporary with the events themselves. If so, it is the oldest piece of historical prose in any Teutonic tongue. More than a hundred years later Ælfred took up the Chronicle, edited it from various sources, added largely to it from Bæda, and raised it to the dignity of a national history. The narrative of Ælfred's wars with the Danes, written, it is likely, by himself at the end of his reign, enables us to estimate the great weight Ælfred himself had in literature. "Compared with this passage," says Mr. Earle, "every other piece of prose, not in these Chronicles merely, but throughout the whole range of extant Saxon literature, must assume a secondary rank." After Ælfred's reign, and that of his son Eadward,

901-925, the Chronicle becomes scanty, but songs and odes are inserted in it. In the reign of Æthelred and during the Danish kings its fulness returns, and growing by additions from various quarters, it continues to be our great contemporary authority in English history till 1154, when it abruptly closes with the death of Stephen. "It is the first history of any Teutonic people in their own language; it is the earliest and the most venerable monument of English prose." In it Old English poetry sang its last song, in its death Old English prose dies. It is not till the reign of John that English poetry in any form but that of short poems appears again in the *Brut* of Layamon. It is not till the reign of Edward III. that original English prose again begins.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE CONQUEST TO CHAUCER'S DEATH, 1066—1400.

Layamon's *Brut*, **1205**.—Ormin's *Ormulum*, **1215**.—Sir John Mandeville's *Travels*, **1356**.—William Langland's *Vision concerning Piers the Plowman*, 3 texts, **1362, 77, 93**. John Wyclif's *Translation of the Bible*, **1380**.—John Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, **1393—4**.

Geoffrey Chaucer, born **1340**, died **1400**.—*Dethe of Blaunche the Duchesse*, **1369**.—*Troylus and Creseide*.—*Parlament of Foules*.—*Compleynt of Mars*.—*Anelida and Arcite*.—*Hous of Fame*, **1374—1384**.—*Legende of Good Women*. **1385**.—*Prose Treatise on Astrolabe*, **1391**.—*Canterbury Tales*, **1373** to **1400**.

17. **General Outline.**—The invasion of Britain by the English made the island, its speech, and its literature, English. The invasion of England by the Danes left our speech and literature still English. The Danes were of our stock and tongue, and we absorbed them. The invasion of England by the

Normans seemed likely to crush the English people, to root out their literature, and even to threaten their speech. But that which happened to the Danes happened to the Normans also, and for the same reason. They were originally of like blood to the English, and of like speech; and though during their settlement in Normandy they had become French in manner and language, and their literature French, yet the old blood prevailed in the end. The Norman felt his kindred with the English tongue and spirit, became an Englishman, and left the French tongue to speak and write in English. We absorbed the Normans, and we took into our literature and speech some French elements they had brought with them. It was a process slower in literature than it was in the political history, but it began from the political struggle. Up to the time of Henry II. the Norman troubled himself but little about the English tongue. But when French foreigners came pouring into the land in the train of Henry and his sons, the Norman allied himself with the Englishman against these foreigners, and the English tongue began to rise into importance. Its literature grew slowly, but as quickly as most of the literatures of Europe, and it never ceased to grow. We are carried on to the year 1154 by the prose of the English Chronicle. There are old English homilies which we may date from 1120. The so-called *Moral Ode*, an English riming poem, was compiled about the year 1160, and is found in a volume of homilies of the same date. In the reign of Henry II., the old Southern-English Gospels of King Æthelred's time were modernised after 200 years or less of use. The *Sayings of Ælfred*, written in English for the English, were composed about the year 1200. About the same date the old English Charters of Bury St. Edmunds were translated into the dialect of the shire, and now, early in the thirteenth century, at the central time of the strife

between English and foreign elements, after the death of Richard I., the *Brut* of Layamon and the *Ormulum* come forth within ten years of each other to prove the continuity, the survival, and the victory of the English tongue. When the patriotic struggle closed in the reign of Edward I., English literature had again risen, through the song, the sermon, and the poem, into importance, and was written by a people made up of Norman and Englishman welded into one by the fight against the foreigner. But though the foreigner was driven out, his literature influenced, and continued to influence, the new English poetry. The poetry, we say, for in this revival our literature was chiefly poetical. Prose, with but few exceptions, was written in Latin.

18. **Religious and Story-telling Poetry** are the two main streams into which this poetical literature divides itself. The religious poetry is entirely English in spirit, and a poetry of the people, from the *Ormulum* of Ormin, 1215, to the *Vision of Piers the Plowman*, in which poem the distinctly English poetry reached its truest expression in 1362. The story-telling poetry is English at its beginning, but becomes more and more influenced by the romantic poetry of France, and in the end grows in Chaucer's hands into a poetry of the court and of high society, a literary in contrast with a popular poetry. But even in this the spirit of the poetry is English, though the manner is French. Chaucer becomes less French and even less Italian in manner, till at last we find him entirely English in feeling — though he borrows some of his subjects from foreign stories—in the *Canterbury Tales*, the best example of English story-telling we possess. The struggle then of England against the foreigner to become and remain England finds its parallel in the struggle of English poetry against the influence of foreign poetry to become and remain English. Both struggles were long and wearisome, but

in both England was triumphant. She became a nation, and she won a national literature. It is the course of this struggle we have now to trace along the two lines already laid down—the poetry of religion and the poetry of story-telling; but to do so we must begin in both instances with the Norman Conquest.

19. **The Religious Poetry.**—The religious revival of the eleventh century was strongly felt in Normandy, and both the knights and Churchmen who came to England with William the Conqueror and during his son's reign, were founders of abbeys, from which, as centres of learning and charity, the country was civilised. In Henry I.'s reign the religion of England was further quickened by missionary monks sent by Bernard of Clairvaux. London was stirred to rebuild St. Paul's, and abbeys rose in all the well-watered valleys of the North. The English citizens of London and the English peasants in the country received a new religious life from the foreign noble and the foreign monk, and both were drawn together through a common worship. When this took place a desire arose for religious handbooks in the English tongue. Ormin's *Ormulum* is a type of these. We may date it, though not precisely, at 1215, the date of the Great Charter. It is entirely English, not five French words are to be found in it. It is a metrical version of the service of each day with the addition of a sermon in verse. The book was called *Ormulum*, "for this, that Orm it wrought." It marks the rise of English religious literature, and its religion is simple and rustic. Orm's ideal monk is to be "a very pure man, and altogether without property, except that he shall be found in simple meat and clothes." He will have "a hard and stiff and rough and heavy life to lead. All his heart and desire ought to be aye toward heaven, and his Master well to serve." This was English religion

in the country at this date. It was continued in English writing by the *Ancren Riwle*—the Rule of the Anchoresses—written about 1220, in the Dorsetshire dialect. The *Genesis and Exodus*, a biblical poem of about 1250, was made by the pious writer to make Christian men as glad as birds at the dawning for the story of salvation. A Northumbrian Psalter of 1250 is only one example out of many devotional pieces, homilies, metrical creeds, hymns to the Virgin, which, with the metrical *Lives of the Saints* (a large volume, the lives translated from Latin or French prose into English verse), carry the religious poetry up to 1300.

20. **Literature and the Friars.**—There was little religion in the towns, but this was soon changed. In 1221 the Mendicant Friars came to England, and they chose the towns for their work. The first Friars who learnt English that they might preach to the people were foreigners, and spoke French. Many English Friars studied in Paris, and came back to England, able to talk to Norman noble and English peasant. Their influence, exercised both on Norman and English, was thus a mediatory and uniting one, and Normans as well as English now began to write religious works in English. In 1303 Robert Manning of Brunne translated a French poem, the Manual of Sins (written thirty years earlier by William of Waddington), under the title of *Handlyng Synne.* William of Shoreham translated the whole of the Psalter into English prose about 1327, and wrote religious poems. The *Cursor Mundi*, written about 1320, and thought "the best book of all" by men of that time, was a metrical version of the Old and New Testament, interspersed, as was the *Handlyng Synne*, with legends of saints. Some scattered Sermons, and in 1340 the *Ayenbite of Inwyt* (Remorse of Conscience), translated from the French, mark how *English prose* was rising through religion. About the same year Richard Rolle

of Hampole wrote in Latin and in Northumbrian English for the "unlearned," a poem called the *Pricke of Conscience*, and some prose treatises. This poem is the last religious poem of any importance before the *Vision of Piers the Plowman*. At its date, 1340, the religious influence of the Friars was swiftly decaying. They had been attacked twenty years before it, in a poem of 1320, and twenty years after it, in 1360, their influence was wholly gone. In *Piers Plowman* (1362) the protest Langland makes for purity of life is also a protest against the foul life and the hypocrisy of the Friars. In that poem, as we shall see, the whole of the popular English religion of the time of Chaucer is represented. In it also the natural, unliterary, country English is best represented. It brings us up in the death of its author to the year 1400, the same year in which Chaucer died.

21. **History and the Story-telling Poetry.**—The Normans brought an historical taste with them to England, and created a valuable historical literature. It was written in Latin, and we have nothing to do with it till story-telling grew out of it in the time of the Great Charter. But it was in itself of such importance that a few things must be said about it.

(1) **The men who wrote it** were called CHRONICLERS. At first they were mere annalists—that is, they jotted down the events of year after year without any attempt to bind them together into a connected whole. But afterwards, from the time of Henry I., another class of men arose, who wrote, not in scattered monasteries, but in the Court. Living at the centre of political life, their histories were written in a philosophic spirit, and wove into a whole the growth of law and national life and the story of affairs abroad. They are our great authorities for the history of these times. They begin with *William of Malmesbury*, whose book ends in 1142, and die out after *Matthew Paris*, 1235—73. Historical literature, written in

prose in England, is only represented after the death of Henry III. by a few dry Latin annalists till it rose again in modern English prose in 1513, when Sir Thomas More's *Life of Edward V. and Usurpation of Richard III.* is said to have been written.

(2) **A distinct English Feeling** soon sprang up among these Norman historians. English patriotism was far from having died among the English themselves. The *Sayings of Ælfred* were written in English by the English. These and some ballads, as well as the early English war-songs, interested the Norman historians and were collected by them. William of Malmesbury, who was born of English and Norman parents, has sympathies with both peoples, and his history marks how both were becoming one nation. The same welding together of the conquered and the conquerors is seen in the others till we come to Matthew Paris, whose view of history is entirely that of an Englishman. When he wrote, Norman noble and English yeoman, Norman abbot and English priest, were, and are in his pages, one in blood and one in interests.

22. **English Story-telling** grew out of this historical literature. There was a Welsh priest at the court of Henry I., called GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH, who, inspired by the Genius of romance, composed twelve short books, which he playfully called History. He had been given, he said, an ancient Welsh book to translate which told in verse the history of Britain from the days when Brut, the great-grandson of Æneas, landed on its shores, through the whole history of King Arthur and his Round Table down to Cadwallo, a Welsh king who died in 689. The Latin "translation" he made of this apocryphal book he completed in 1147. The real historians were angry at the fiction, and declared that throughout the whole of it "he had lied saucily and shamelessly." It was indeed only a clever putting together and invention

of a number of Welsh legends, but it was *the beginning of story-telling* in our land. Every one who read it was delighted with it; it made, as we should say, a sensation, and as much on the Continent as in England. In it the Welsh, as I have said, invaded English literature, and their tales have never since ceased to live in it. They charm us as much in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* as they charmed us in the days of Henry I. But the stories Geoffrey of Monmouth told were in Latin prose. They were put first into French verse by Geoffrey Gaimar for the wife of his patron, Ralph FitzGilbert, a northern baron. They got afterwards to France and, added to from Breton legends, were made into a poem and decked out with the ornaments of French romance. In that form they came back to England as the work of Wace, a Norman trouveur, the writer also of the *Roman de Rou*, who called his poem the *Brut*, and completed it in 1155, shortly after the accession of Henry II.

23. **Layamon's "Brut."**—In this French form the story drifted through England, and at last falling into the hands of an English priest in Worcestershire, he resolved to tell it in English verse to his countrymen, and doing so became the writer of our first English poem after the Conquest. We may roughly say that its date is 1205, ten years or so before the *Ormulum* was written, ten years before the Great Charter. It is plain that its composition, though it told a Welsh story, was looked on as a patriotic work by the writer. "There was a priest in the land," he writes of himself, "whose name was Layamon; he was son of Leovenath: May the Lord be gracious unto him! He dwelt at Earnley, a noble church on the bank of Severn, near Radstone, where he read books. It came in mind to him and in his chiefest thought that he would tell the noble deeds of England, what the men were named, and whence they came, who first had English land." And it was truly of great

importance. The poem opened to the imagination of the English people an immense, though a fabled, past for the history of the island they dwelt in, and made a common bond of interest between Norman and Englishman. Though chiefly rendered from the French, there are not fifty French words in its 30,000 lines. The old English alliterative metre is kept up with a few rare rimes. As we read the short quick lines in which the battles are described, as we listen to the simple metaphors, and feel the strong, rude character of the poem, we are put in mind of Cædmon; and what Cædmon was to early English poetry, Layamon is to English poetry after the Conquest. He is the first of the new singers.

24. **Story-telling grows French in form.**—After an interval the desire for story-telling increased in England. The *Romance of Sir Tristram* was, it is supposed, versified in 1270, and many other tales of Arthur's Knights, and some stories which had an English origin, such as the lays of *Havelok the Dane* and of *King Horn* (both about 1280), were translated from the French, while Edward I. was making Norman and English into one people. The *Romance of King Alexander*, originally a Greek work, was, at the same date, adapted from the French into English, and about 1300 Robert of Gloucester wrote his *Riming Chronicle*, a history of England from Brutus to the reign of Edward I.[1] As the dates grow nearer to 1300, seven years before the death of Edward I., the amount of French words increases, and the French romantic manner of telling stories is more and more marked.

[1] I may mention in this place that between 1327 and 1338, Robert of Brunne whose *Handlyng Sinne* is spoken of at p. 26, made another English Chronicle, translating the first part from Wace's *Brut*, p. 29, and the second part from Peter Langtoft's French *Metrical Chronicle*. It is a fresh instance of the eagerness with which French work was now got into English, for Langtoft, a Canon of Bridlington, had only written his *Chronicle* a few years before.

In the *Lay of Havelok* the spirit and descriptions of the poem still resemble old English work; in the *Romance of Alexander*, on the other hand, the natural landscape, the conventional introductions to the parts, the gorgeous descriptions of pomps, and armour, and cities, the magic wonders, the manners, and feasts, and battles of chivalry, the love passages, are all steeped in the colours of French romantic poetry. Now this romance was adapted by a Frenchman about the year 1200. It took therefore nearly a century before the French romantic manner of poetry could be naturalised in English; and it was naturalised, curious to say, at the very time when England as a nation had lost its French elements and become entirely English.

25. **Cycles of Romance.**—At this time, then, the French romance of a hundred years earlier was popularised in England. There were four great romantic stories. The first was that of *King Arthur and the Round Table*, and Geoffrey of Monmouth introduced it into England, p. 28. Walter Map, a councillor and friend of Henry II., and afterwards Archdeacon of York, took up Geoffrey's work, and threw into form, in Latin, all the Arthur legends. He invented and added to them the story of the *Quest of the Graal* (the Holy Dish that contained the sacramental blood of Christ and the Paschal Lamb), and made it their centre. By this invention he bound all the Arthur legends up with the highest doctrine of the Church. Afterwards he added the *Morte d'Arthur*. The impulse thus given was continued at home and abroad in the invention of new Arthurian stories, and by 1300 they were all popular in England and sung and made into English verse.

The second romantic story was that of *Charlemagne and his twelve peers*. Forged about 1110 in the name of Archbishop Turpin, it excited interest in the Crusades by inventing a visit of Charlemagne's to the Holy Sepulchre and various stories and battles of his

peers with the Saracens in Spain. Of the number of romances which grew out of this subject, we English have only six poems or fragments of poems, one of *Roland*, one of *Otuwell*, one of *Charlemagne and Roland*, a *Siege of Milan*, *Sir Ferumbras* in three or four different versions, and the humorous *Rouf Coillyear*. Their dates extend over the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

The third romantic story arose after the Crusades, and is that of the *Life of Alexander*, already alluded to as coming from the East. Its romantic wonders, fictions, and magic, partly derived from the Arabian books about Eskander (Alexander), were doubled by the imagination and coloured with all the romance of chivalry; and the story became so common in England that "every wight that hath discrecioune," says Chaucer, had heard of Alexander's fortune.

The fourth romantic story was that of the *Siege of Troy*. Two Latin pieces, bearing the names of *Dares Phrygius* and of *Dictys Cretensis*, composed in the decline of Latin literature, were taken up by Guido di Colonna of Messina about 1260, and with fabulous and romantic inventions of his own, and with additions woven into them from the Theban and Argonautic stories (so that Jason and Hercules and Theseus were incorporated into romance), were made into a great Latin story in fifteen books. It does not seem to have much entered into English literature till Chaucer's time, but Chaucer and Lydgate both used it.

These were the four great Romantic cycles, which we popularised from the French. But the desire for romances was not satisfied with these. About the reign of Edward I. a romance of *Richard Cœur de Lion*, and about 1360 the *Romance of William and the Werwolf*, were both translated from the French. Chaucer mentions *Sir Bevis of Southampton*, *Sir Guy of Warwick*, the *Squire of Low Degree*, *Ypotis* a theological story, *Sidrac*, and others.

There were also *Syr Degoré* (L'Egaré), *King Robert of Sicily*, the *King of Tars*, *Ipomydon*, *Octavian the Emperour*, &c., all taken from the French, and made English in the times of the Edwards. The country was therefore swarming with French tales, and its poetic imagination with the fancies and the fables of French chivalry. Finally, the influence of this French school in England is seen in the stories of Gower, and in the earlier poems of Chaucer. It lasted on, after Chaucer's death, in such poems as the *Court of Love*, written about 1470, and wrongly attributed to Chaucer. It came to its height in the translation of the *Romaunt of the Rose*, the crowning effort also of French romance, but of a new type of romance, that of the Allegory of Love. After the earlier poems of Chaucer the story-telling of England sought its subjects in another country than France. It turned to Italy.

26. **English Lyrics.**— In the midst of all this story-telling, like prophecies of what should afterwards be so lovely in our poetry, rose, no one can tell how, some lyric poems, country idylls, love songs, and, later on, some war songs. The English ballad, sung from town to town by wandering gleemen, had never altogether died. A number of rude ballads collected round the legendary *Robin Hood*, and the kind of poetic literature which sung of the outlaw and the forest, and afterwards so fully of the wild border life, gradually took form. About 1280 a beautiful little idyll called the *Owl and the Nightingale* was written, probably in Dorsetshire, in which the rival birds submit their quarrel for precedence to the possible writer of the poem, Nicholas of Guildford. About 1300 we meet with a few lyric poems, full of charm. They sing of spring-time with its blossoms, of the woods ringing with the thrush and nightingale, of the flowers and the seemly sun, of country work, of the woes and joys of love, and many other delightful

things. They are tinged with the colour of French romance, but they have an English background. We read nothing like them, except in Scotland, till we come to the Elizabethan time. About the same date we find the *satirical* poem of the *Land of Cockaygne*, (*coquina*, a kitchen), where the monks live in an abbey built of pasties, and the rivers run with wine, and the geese fly through the air ready roasted, and a fair nunnery is close by, upon a river of sweet milk. The old *gnomic* poetry returns in the *Proverbs of Hendyng*, 1272, 1307. Political ballads now began, in Edward I.'s reign, to be frequently written in English, but the only ballads of importance are that on the battle of Lewes, 1264, and the ten war-lyrics of Lawrence Minot, who, in 1352, sang the great deeds and battles of Edward III.

27. **The King's English.**—We have thus traced the rise of our English literature to the time of Chaucer. We must now complete the sketch by a word or two on the language in which it was written. The literary English language seemed at first to be destroyed by the Conquest. It lingered till Stephen's death in the English Chronicle; a few traces of it are still found about Henry's III.'s death in the *Brut* of Layamon. But, practically speaking, from the twelfth century till the middle of the fourteenth there was no standard of English. The language, spoken only by the people, fell back into that broken state of anarchy in which each part of the country has its own dialect, and each writer uses the dialect of his own dwelling-place. All the poems then of which we have spoken were written in dialects of English, not in a fixed English common to all writers. French or Latin was the language of literature and of the literary class. But towards the middle of Edward III.'s reign English got the better of French. After the Black Death in 1349 French was less used; in 1362 English was made the language of the courts of law. In the meantime,

during the prevalence of French, English prose and poetry had been invaded by French words. The *Ancren Riwle*, fifteen years after the *Brut* of Layamon, is full of them, and after Henry III.'s death a host of them rushed in, and the old English words died out in proportion. One-seventh of the old English verbs, adverbs, and nouns used in 1200 are gone in 1300. Against 250 Romance words used in 1200, we have 800 used in 1300. A great deal of this work was done by the Friars. The medicine, the science of the time, were in their hands, and from 1220 they mixed themselves up, both by preaching and in society, with the crafts of the merchantmen and, interlarding all their speech with French words, made these words common among the crafts and the middle classes, till they stole in even into the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. Architecture, of course, became French in terms; the Norman ladies introduced French terms of dress, and of all the arts and trades that ministered to their luxury. The knight brought in French terms for all the matters that had to do with war and hunting and cookery; the lawyer, French terms that belonged to law and government; while the Friars, talking to the people of the vices, luxury, customs and lives of the upper class, made all these new French words common to the ears of the English-speaking classes. A great change was thus wrought in the English language. At the same time most of the older inflections had disappeared, except in the South, and French endings and French prefixes began to be also used, till at last Oliphant can say that almost "every one of the Teutonic changes of idiom, distinguishing the old English from the new, the speech of Queen Victoria from that of Hengest, are to be found, in 1303, in Robert of Brunne's work, and a third of his nouns, verbs, and adverbs are French." In him then the new English arose into clear form. But it was not as yet a standard English: it was still in Robert's work

a dialect, the East-Midland dialect. Of the three dialects the Northern and Southern alone existed before the Conquest; but the literary English, which we may call Anglo-Saxon, was distinct from both, and we have said that it all but perished after the Conquest. Another dialect then grew up in the Midland shires—in East Anglia, and to the west of the Pennine chain. It was the Midland dialect, and spoken over the largest tract, was divided into West and East Midland. The East Midland became the language of literature, the standard English. Becoming, "in cloisters on the Nen and the Welland," the fullest receiver of the French words, and the largest accepter of the changes, and especially in Robert of Brunne's work, it took hold of Cambridge, and then of Oxford, and spoken and written in these two centres of learning, crept down, conquering, to the South, and finally seized on London.[1] It did not overthrow the dialects, for the *Vision of Piers the Plowman* and Wiclif's translation of the Bible are both in a dialect, but it became the standard English, the language in which all future English literature was to be written. It was fixed into clear form by Chaucer and Gower. It was the language talked at the court and in the court society to which these poets belonged. It was the King's English, and the fact that it was the tongue of the best and most cultivated society, as well as the great excellence of the works written in it by these poets, made it at once the tongue of literature.

28. **Religious Literature in Langland and Wiclif.**—We have traced the work of "transition English," as it has been called, along the lines of popular religion and story-telling. The first of these, in the realm of poetry, reaches its goal in the work of William Langland; in the realm of prose it reaches its goal in Wiclif. In both these writers, the work

[1] See for all this Oliphant's *Standard English*, an admirable book.

differs from any that went before it, by its extraordinary power, and by the depth of its religious feeling. It is plain that it represented a society much more strongly moved by religion than that of the beginning of the fourteenth century. In Wiclif, the voice comes from the university, and it went all over the land in the body of preachers whom, like Wesley, he sent forth. In Langland's *Vision* we have a voice from the centre of the people themselves; his poem is written in a style made uncouth by the necessities of its alliterative English verse, and in the old English manner. The very ploughboy could understand it. It became the book of those who desired social and Church reform. It was as eagerly read by the free labourers and fugitive serfs who collected round John Ball and Wat Tyler.

29. **Causes of the Religious Revival.**—It was originally due to the preaching of the Friars in the thirteenth century, and to the noble example they set of devotion to the poor. When the Friars however became rich, though pretending to be poor, and impure of life, though pretending to goodness, the religious feeling they had stirred turned against themselves, and its two strongest cries, both on the Continent and in England, were for Truth, and for Purity, in private life, in State and Church.

Another cause common to the Continent and to England in this century was the movement for the equal rights of man against the class system of the middle ages. It was made a religious movement when men said that they were equal before God, and that goodness in His eyes was the only nobility. And it brought with it a religious protest against the oppression of the people by the class of the nobles.

There were two other causes, however, special to England at this time. One was the utter misery of the people, owing to the French wars. Heavy taxation

fell upon them, and they were ground down by severe laws, which prevented them bettering themselves. They felt this all the more because so many of them had bought their freedom, and began to feel the delight of freedom. It was then that in their misery they turned to religion, not only as their sole refuge, but as supplying them with reasons for a social revolution. The other cause was the Black Death, the Great Plague which, in 1349, '62, and '69, swept over England. Grass grew in the towns; whole villages were left uninhabited; a wild panic fell upon the people, which was added to by a terrible tempest in 1362 that to men's minds told of the wrath of God. In their terror then, as well as in their pain, they fled to religion.

30. **Piers the Plowman.**—All these elements are to be found fully represented in the *Vision of Piers the Plowman.* Its author, WILLIAM LANGLAND, though we are not certain of his surname, was born, about 1332, at Cleobury Mortimer, in Shropshire. His *Vision* begins with a description of his sleeping on the Malvern Hills, and the first text of it was probably written in the country in 1362. At the accession of Richard II., 1377, he was in London. The great popularity of his poem made him in that year, and again in the year 1393, send forth two more texts of his poem. In these texts he added to the original *Vision* the poems of *Do Wel, Do Bet,* and *Do Best.* In 1399, he wrote at Bristol his last poem, the *Deposition of Richard II.*, and then died, probably in 1400.

He paints his portrait as he was when he lived in Cornhill, a tall, gaunt figure, whom men called Long Will; clothed in the black robes in which he sang for a few pence at the funerals of the rich; hating to take his cap off his shaven head to bow to the lords and ladies that rode by in silver and furs as he stalked in observant moodiness along the Strand. It is this

figure, which in indignant sorrow walks through the whole poem.

31. **His Vision.**—The dream of the "field full of folk," with which it begins, brings together nearly as many typical characters as the Tales of Chaucer do. In the first part, the Truth sought for is *righteous dealing* in Church, and Law, and State. After the Prologue of the "field full of folk" and in it the Tower of Truth, and the Dungeon where the Father of Falsehood lives, the *Vision* treats of Holy Church who tells the dreamer of Truth. Where is Falsehood? he asks. She bids him turn, and he sees Falsehood, and Lady Meed (or Bribery), and learns that they are to be married. Theology interferes, and all the parties go to London before the King. Lady Meed arraigned on Falsehood's flight, is advised by the King to marry Conscience, but Conscience indignantly proclaims her faults, and prophesies that one day Reason will judge the world. On this the King sends for Reason, who, deciding a question against Wrong and in spite of Bribery, is begged by the King to remain with him. This fills four divisions or "Passus." The fifth Passus contains the Vision of the *Seven Deadly Sins*, and is full of vivid pictures of friars, robbers, nuns, of village life, of London alehouses, of all the vices of the time. It ends with the search for Truth being taken up by all the penitents, and then for the first time Piers the Plowman appears and describes the way. He sets all who come to him to hard work, and it is here that the passages occur in which the labouring poor and their evils are dwelt upon. The seventh Passus introduces the bull of pardon sent by Truth (God the Father) to Piers. A Priest declares it is not valid, and the discussion between him and Piers is so hot that the Dreamer awakes and ends with a fine outburst on the wretchedness of a trust in indulgences and the nobleness of a righteous life. This is the original poem.

In the second part the truth sought for is that of

righteous life, to *Do Well*, to *Do Better*, to *Do Best*, the three titles of the poems added afterwards. In a series of dreams and a highly-wrought allegory, *Do Well*, *Do Bet*, and *Do Best*, are finally identified with Jesus Christ, who now appears as Love in the dress of Piers the Plowman. *Do Well* is full of curious and important passages. *Do Bet* points out Christ as the Saviour of the World, describes His death, resurrection and victory over Death and Sin. And the dreamer wakes in a transport of joy, with the Easter chimes pealing in his ears. But as Langland looked round on the world, the victory did not seem real, and the stern dreamer passed out of triumph into the dark sorrow in which he lived. He dreams again in *Do Best*, and sees, as Christ leaves the earth, the reign of Antichrist. Evils attack the Church and mankind. Envy, Pride, and Sloth, helped by the Friars, besiege Conscience. Conscience cries on Contrition to help him, but Contrition is asleep, and Conscience, all but despairing, grasps his pilgrim staff and sets out to wander over the world, praying for luck and health, "till he have Piers the Plowman," till he find the Saviour. And then the dreamer wakes for the last time, weeping bitterly.

This is the poem which wrought so strongly in men's minds that its influence was almost as widely spread as Wiclif's in the revolt which had now begun against Latin Christianity. Its fame was so great, that it produced imitators. About 1394, another alliterative poem was set forth by an unknown author, with the title of *Pierce the Plowman's Crede;* and the *Plowman's Tale*, wrongly attributed to Chaucer, is another witness to the popularity of Langland.

32. **Wiclif.**—At the same time as the *Vision* was being read all over England, JOHN WICLIF, about 1380, began his work in the English tongue with a nearly complete *Translation of the Bible*. It was a book which had as much influence in fixing our language as the

work of Chaucer. But he did much more than this for our tongue. He made it the popular language of religious thought and feeling. In 1381 he was in full battle with the Church on the doctrine of transubstantiation, and was condemned to silence. He replied by appealing to the whole of England in the speech of the people. He sent forth tract after tract, sermon after sermon, couched not in the dry, philosophic style of the schoolmen, but in short, sharp, stinging sentences, full of the homely words used in his own Bible, denying one by one almost all the doctrines, and denouncing the practices, of the Church of Rome. He was our first Protestant. It was a new literary vein to open, the vein of the pamphleteer. With his work then, and with Langland's, we bring up to the year 1400 the English prose and poetry pertaining to religion, the course of which we have been tracing since the Conquest.

33. **Story-telling** is the other line on which we have placed our literature, and it is represented first by JOHN GOWER. He belongs to a school older than Chaucer, inasmuch as he is scarcely touched by the Italian, but chiefly by the French influence. Fifty *Balades* prove with what grace he could write when a young man in the French tongue about the affairs of love. As he grew older he grew graver, and partly as the religious and social reformer, and partly as the story-teller, he fills up the literary transition between Langland and Chaucer. In the church of St. Saviour, at Southwark, his head is still seen resting on his three great works, the *Speculum Meditantis*, the *Vox Clamantis*, the *Confessio Amantis*, 1393. It marks the unsettled state of our literary language, that each of these was written in a different tongue, the first in French, the second in Latin, the third in English.

The third, his English work, is a dialogue between a lover and his confessor a priest of Venus, and in its course, and with an imitation of Jean de Meun's

part of the *Roman de la Rose*, all the passions and studies which may hinder love are dwelt upon, partly in allegory, and their operation illustrated by apposite stories, borrowed from the *Gesta Romanorum* and from the Romances. The tales are wearisome, and the smoothness of the verse makes them more wearisome. But Gower was a careful writer of English; and in his satire of evils, and in his grave reproof of the follies of Richard II., he rises into his best strain. The king himself, even though reproved, was a patron of the poet. It was as Gower was rowing on the Thames that the royal barge drew near, and he was called to the king's side. "Book some new thing," said the king, "in the way you are used, into which book I myself may often look;" and the request was the origin of the *Confession of a Lover*. It is with pleasure that we turn from the learned man of talent to Geoffrey Chaucer—to the genius who called Gower, with perhaps some of the irony of an artist, "the moral Gower."

34. **Chaucer's French Period.**—GEOFFREY CHAUCER was the son of a vintner, of Thames Street, London, and was born, it is now believed, in 1340. He lived almost all his life in London, in the centre of its work and society. When he was sixteen he became page to the wife of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, and continued at the Court till he joined the army in France in 1359. He was taken prisoner, but ransomed before the treaty of Bretigny, in 1360. We then know nothing of his life for six years; but from items in the Exchequer Rolls, we find that he was again connected with the Court, from 1366 to 1372. It was during this time that he began to write. His first poem may have been the *A, B, C*, a prayer Englished from the French at the request of the Duchess Blanche. The translation of the *Romaunt of the Rose* has been attributed to him, but the best critics are doubtful of, or deny, his authorship. They are only sure of

two poems, the *Compleynte to Pity* in 1368, and in the next year the *Dethe of Blaunche the Duchesse*, whose husband, John of Gaunt, was Chaucer's patron. These, being written under the influence of French poetry, are classed under the name of Chaucer's first period. There are lines in them which seem to speak of a luckless love affair, and in this broken love it has been supposed we find the key to Chaucer's early life.

35. **Chaucer's Italian Period.** — Chaucer's second poetic period may be called the period of Italian influence, from 1372 to 1384. During these years he went for the king on no less than seven diplomatic missions. Three of these, in 1372, '74, and '78, were to Italy. At that time the great Italian literature which inspired then, and still inspires, European literature, had reached full growth, and it opened to Chaucer a new world of art. His many quotations from Dante show that he had read the *Divina Commedia*, and we may well think that he then first learnt the full power and range of poetry. He read the Sonnets of Petrarca, and he learnt what is meant by "form" in poetry. He read the tales and poems of Boccaccio, who made Italian prose, and in them he first saw how to tell a story exquisitely. Petrarca and Boccaccio he may even have met, for they died in 1374 and 1375, but he never saw Dante, who died at Ravenna in 1321. When he came back from these journeys he was a new man. He threw aside the romantic poetry of France, and laughed at it in his gay and kindly manner in the *Rime of Sir Thopas*, afterwards made one of the *Canterbury Tales*. His chief work of this time bears witness to the influence of Italy. It was *Troylus and Creseide*, 1382 (?), a translation, with many changes and additions, of the *Filostrato* of Boccaccio. The additions (and he nearly doubled the poem) are stamped with his own peculiar tenderness, vividness, and simplicity. His changes from the original are all towards the side of

purity, good taste, and piety. We meet the further influence of Boccaccio in the birth of some of the *Canterbury Tales*, and of Petrarca in the Tales themselves. To this time is now referred the tales of the Second Nun, the Monk, the Doctor, the Man of Law, the Clerk, the Prioress, the Squire, the Franklin, Sir Thopas, and the first draft of the Knight's Tale, borrowed, with much freedom, from the *Teseide* of Boccaccio. The other poems of this period were the *Compleynt of Mars*, *Anelida and Arcite*, *Boece*, the *Former Age*, and the *Parlament of Foules*, all between 1374 and 1382, the *Lines to Adam Scrivener*, 1383, and the *Hous of Fame*, 1384 (?). In the passion with which Chaucer describes the ruined love of Troilus and Anelida, some have traced the lingering sorrow of his early love affair. But if this be true, it was now passing away, for in the creation of Pandarus in the *Troilus*, and in the delightful fun of the *Parlament of Foules*, a new Chaucer appears, the humorous poet of some of the *Canterbury Tales*. In the active business life he led during this period he was likely to grow out of mere sentiment, for he was not only employed on service abroad, but also at home. In 1374 he was Comptroller of the Wool Customs, in 1382 of the Petty Customs, and in 1386 Member of Parliament for Kent.

36. **Chaucer's English Period.**—It is in the next period, from 1384 to 1390, that he left behind (except in the borrowing of his subjects) Italian influence as he had left French, and became entirely himself, entirely English. The comparative poverty in which he now lived, and the loss of his offices, for in John of Gaunt's absence court favour was withdrawn from him, may have given him more time for study and the retired life of a poet. At least in his *Legende of Good Women*, the prologue to which was written in 1385, we find him a closer student than ever of books and of nature. His

appointment as Clerk of the Works in 1389 brought him again into contact with men. He superintended the repairs and building at the Palace of Westminster, the Tower, and St. George's Chapel, Windsor, till July, 1391, when he was superseded, and lived on pensions allotted to him by Richard, and by Henry IV., after he had sent that king in 1399 his *Compleint to his Purse.* Before 1390, however, he had added to his great work its most English tales; the Miller, the Reeve, the Cook, the Wife of Bath, the Merchant, the Friar, the Nun, Priest, Pardoner, and perhaps the Sompnour. The Prologue was probably written in 1388. In these, in their humour, in their vividness of portraiture, in their ease of narration, and in the variety of their characters, Chaucer shines supreme. A few smaller poems belong to this time, such as *Truth* and the *Moder of God.*

During the last ten years of his life, which may be called the period of his decay, he wrote some small poems, and along with the *Compleynte of Venus,* and a prose treatise on the Astrolabe, three more Canterbury tales, the Canon's-yeoman's, Manciple's, and Parsone's. The last was written the year of his death, 1400. Having done this work he died in a house under the shadow of the Abbey of Westminster. Within the walls of the Abbey Church, the first of the poets who lies there, that "sacred and happy spirit" sleeps.

37. **Chaucer's Character.**—Born of the tradesman class, Chaucer was in every sense of the word one of our finest gentlemen: tender, graceful in thought, glad of heart, humorous, and satirical without unkindness; sensitive to every change of feeling in himself and others, and therefore full of sympathy; brave in misfortune, even to mirth, and doing well and with careful honesty all he undertook. His first and great delight was in human nature, and he makes us love the noble characters in his poems, and feel with kindliness towards the baser and ruder

sort. He never sneers, for he had a wide charity, and we can always smile in his pages at the follies and forgive the sins of men. He had a true and chivalrous regard for women of his own class, and his wife and he ought to have been very happy if they had fulfilled the ideal he had of marriage.[1] He lived in aristocratic society, and yet he thought him the greatest gentleman who was "most vertuous alway, privé, and pert (open), and most entendeth aye to do the gentil dedés that he can." He lived frankly among men, and as we have seen, saw many different types of men, and in his own time filled many parts as a man of the world and of business. Yet, with all this active and observant life, he was commonly very quiet and kept much to himself. The Host in the Tales japes at him for his lonely, abstracted air. "Thou lookest as thou wouldest find a hare, And ever on the ground I see thee stare." Being a good scholar, he read morning and night alone, and he says that after his (office) work he would go home and sit at another book as dumb as a stone, till his look was dazed. While at study and when he was making of songs and ditties, "nothing else that God had made" had any interest for him. There was but one thing that roused him then, and that too he liked to enjoy alone. It was the beauty of the morning and the fields, the woods, and streams, and flowers, and the singing of the little birds. This made his heart full of revel and solace, and when spring came after winter, he rose with the lark and cried, "Farewell, my book and my devotion." He was the first who made the love of nature a distinct element in our poetry. He was the first who, in spending the whole day gazing alone on the daisy, set going that lonely delight in natural scenery which is so special a mark of our later poets. He lived thus a double life, in and out

[1] If we may judge from the poems—see especially his marriage Poem to *Bukton*—he was even more unhappy than Shakspere in his married life.

of the world, but never a gloomy one. For he was fond of mirth and good-living, and when he grew towards age, was portly of waist, "no poppet to embrace." But he kept to the end his elfish countenance, the shy, delicate, half mischievous face which looked on men from its grey hair and forked beard, and was set off by his dark-coloured dress and hood. A knife and inkhorn hung on his dress; we see a rosary in his hand; and when he was alone he walked swiftly.

38. **The Canterbury Tales.**—Of his work it is not easy to speak briefly, because of its great variety. Enough has been said of it, with the exception of his most complete creation, the *Canterbury Tales*. It will be seen from the dates given above that they were not written at one time. They are not, and cannot be looked on as a whole. Many were written independently, and then fitted into the framework of the Prologue in 1388. At that time a number more were written, and the rest added at intervals till his death. In fact, the whole thing was done much in the same way as Mr. Tennyson has written his *Idylls of the King*. The manner in which he knitted them together was very simple, and likely to please the English people. The holiday excursions of the time were the pilgrimages, and the most famous and the pleasantest pilgrimage to go, especially for Londoners, was the three or four days' journey to see the shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury. Persons of all ranks in life met and travelled together, starting from a London inn. Chaucer seized on this as the frame in which to set his pictures of life. He grouped around the jovial host of the Tabard Inn men and women of every class of society in England, set them on horseback to ride to Canterbury, and made each of them tell a tale. No one could hit off a character better, and in his Prologue, and in the prologues to the several Tales,

the whole of the new, vigorous English society which had grown up since Edward I. is painted with astonishing vividness. "I see all the pilgrims in the *Canterbury Tales*," says Dryden, "their humours, their features, and the very dress, as distinctly as if I had supped with them at the Tabard in Southwark." The Tales themselves take in the whole range of the poetry of the middle ages; the legend of the saint, the romance of the Knight, the wonderful fables of the traveller, the coarse tale of common life, the love story, the allegory, the satirical lay, and the apologue. And they are pure tales. He is not in any sense a dramatic writer; he is our greatest story-teller in verse. All the best tales are told easily, sincerely, with great grace, and yet with so much homeliness, that a child would understand them. Sometimes his humour is broad, sometimes sly, sometimes gay, sometimes he brings tears into our eyes, and he can make us smile or be sad as he pleases.

He had a very fine ear for the music of verse, and the tale and the verse go together like voice and music. Indeed, so softly flowing and bright are they, that to read them is like listening in a meadow full of sunshine to a clear stream rippling over its bed of pebbles. The English in which they are written is almost the English of our time; and it is literary English. Chaucer made our tongue into a true means of poetry. He did more, he welded together the French and English elements in our language and made them into one English tool for the use of literature, and all our prose writers and poets derive their tongue from the language of the *Canterbury Tales*. They give him honour for this, but still more for that he was the first English artist. Poetry is an art, and the artist in poetry is one who writes for pure pleasure and for nothing else the thing he writes, and who desires to give to others the same fine pleasure by

his poems which he had in writing them. The thing he most cares about is that the form in which he puts his thoughts or feelings may be perfectly fitting to the subject, and as beautiful as possible—but for this he cares very greatly; and in this Chaucer stands apart from the other poets of his time. Gower wrote with a set object, and nothing can be duller than the form in which he puts his tales. The author of *Piers the Plowman* wrote with the object of reform in social and ecclesiastical affairs, and his form is uncouth and harsh. Chaucer wrote because he was full of emotion and joy in his own thoughts, and thought that others would weep and be glad with him, and the only time he ever moralises is in the tales of the Yeoman and the Manciple, written in his decay. He has, then, the best right to the poet's name. He is our first English artist.

39. **Mandeville.**—I have already noticed the prose of Wiclif under the religious class of English work. I have kept Sir John Mandeville for this place, because he belongs to light literature. He is called our "first writer in formed English," and his English is that spoken at court in the later years of Edward III. Chaucer himself however wrote some things, and especially one of his Tales, in an involved prose, and John of Trevisa translated into English prose, 1387, Higden's *Polychronicon.* Mandeville wrote his *Travels* first in Latin, then in French, and finally put them into our tongue about 1356, "that every man of the nation might understand them." His quaint delight in telling his "traveller's tales," and sometimes the grace with which he tells them, rank him among the story-tellers of England. What he himself saw he describes accurately, and he saw a great part of the world. Thirty-four years he wandered, even to the Tartars of Cathay, and then, unwearied, wrote his book at home.

CHAPTER III.

FROM CHAUCER, 1400, TO ELIZABETH, 1559.

Thomas Hoccleve (Henry V.'s reign); J. Lydgate, *Falls of Princes* (in Henry VI.). – Sir John Fortescue's prose work, and Sir T. Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* (Edward IV.).—Caxton prints at Westminster, **1477**.—Paston Letters, **1422—1505**.—Hawes' *Pastime of Pleasure*, **1506**.—John Skelton's poems, **1508—1529**.—Sir T. More's *History of Richard III.*, **1513**.—Tyndale's *Translation of the Bible*, **1525**.— *English Prayer Book*, **1549**.—Ascham's *Toxophilus*, **1545**.—Poems of Wyatt and Surrey, in *Tottel's Miscellany*, **1557**.

SCOTTISH POETRY, begins with Barbour's *Bruce*, **1375—7**; James I.'s *King's Quhair*, **1424**.—T. Henryson dies, **1508**.—Dunbar's *Thistle and Rose*, **1503**.—Gawin Douglas dies, **1522**.—Sir D. Lyndsay born, **1490**; *Satire of Three Estates*, **1535**; dies **1555**.

40. **The Fifteenth Century Poetry.**—The last poems of Chaucer and Langland bring our story up to 1400. The hundred years that followed is the most barren in our literature. The influence of Chaucer lasted, and of the poems attributed to him, but now rejected by scholars, some certainly belong to the first half of this century. The *Court of Love*, *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*, *The Flower and the Leaf*, the *Complaint of the Black Knight*, stated by Shirley, Chaucer's contemporary, to be Lydgate's, *Chaucer's Dream*, *A Goodly Ballad of Chaucer*, *A Praise of Women*, *Leaulte vault Richesse*, *Proverbes of Chaucer*,[1] the last two stanzas of which are a separate poem attributed by Shirley to "Halsam, squiere," the *Roundel*, the *Virelai*, and *Chaucer's Prophecy*, are with the *Romaunt of the Rose* (which I cannot surrender), held by Mr. Bradshaw not to be Chaucer's. They will be found in the editions of Chaucer, and

[1] Morris's *Chaucer*, vi. 303.

some of them, especially *The Flower and the Leaf* and *The Cuckoo and the Nightingale*, prove that there were poets who could, during this century, not only imitate the style, but also drink of the spirit of Chaucer.

41. **Thomas Hoccleve**, a bad versifier of the reign of Henry V., loved Chaucer well. "With his loss the whole land smartith," he said; and in the MS. of his longest poem, the *Governail of Princes*, written before 1413, he caused to be drawn, with fond idolatry, the portrait of his "master dear and father reverent," who had enlumined all the land with his books.

42. **John Lydgate** was a more worthy follower of Chaucer. A monk of Bury, and thirty years of age when Chaucer died, he yet wrote nothing of much importance till the reign of Henry VI. He was a gay and pleasant person, though a long-winded poet, and he seems to have lived even in his old age, when he recalls himself as a boy "weeping for naught, anon after glad," the fresh and natural life of one who enjoyed everything; but, like many gay persons, he had a vein of melancholy, and some of his best work, at least in the poet Gray's opinion, belongs to the realms of pathetic and moral poetry. But there was scarcely any literary work he could not do. He rimed history, ballads, and legends, till the monastery was delighted. He made pageants for Henry VI., masks and May-games for aldermen, mummeries for the Lord Mayor, and satirical ballads on the follies of the day. Educated at Oxford, a traveller in France and Italy, he knew the literature of his time, and he even dabbled in the sciences. He was as much a lover of nature as Chaucer, but cannot make us feel the beauty of nature in the same way. It is his story-telling which links him closest to his master. His three chief poems were the *Falls of Princes*, the *Storie of Thebes*, and the *Troye Book*. The first is a translation of a French version of Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum et Feminarum Illus-*

trium. It tells the tragic fates of great men and women from the time of Adam to the capture of King John of France at Poitiers. The plan is dramatic; the sorrowful dead appear before Boccaccio, pensive in his library, and each tells of his downfall. *The Storie of Thebes* is introduced as an additional Canterbury Tale, and is made into a chivalric romance. The *Troye Book* is a version from the French of Guido di Colonna's prose romance. A hundred years, as we shall see, did not exhaust his influence, for in the *Mirror of Magistrates*, eight poets united to write a supplement to his *Falls of Princes*.

A few minor poets do no more now than keep poetry alive. Another version of the Troy Story in Henry VI.'s time; Hugh de Campeden's *Sidrac*, Thomas Chestre's *Lay of Sir Launfal*, and the translation of the *Earl of Toulouse*, prove that romances were still taken from the French. William Lichfield's *Complaint between God and Man*, and William Nassington's *Mirrour of Life*, carry on the religious, and the *Tournament of Tottenham* the satirical, poetry. John Capgrave's translation of the *Life of St. Catherine* is less known than his *Chronicle of England* dedicated to Edward IV. He, with John Harding, a soldier of Agincourt, whose riming Chronicle belongs to Edward IV.'s reign, continue the historical poetry. A number of obscure versifiers, Thomas Norton, and George Ripley who wrote on alchemy, and Dame Juliana Berners' book on Hunting, bring us to the reign of Henry VII., when Skelton first began to write. Meanwhile poetry, which had decayed in England, was flourishing in Scotland (p. 62).

43. **Ballads,** lays, fragments of romances, had been sung in England from the earliest times, and popular tales and jokes took form in short lyric pieces, to be accompanied with music and dancing. In fact the ballad went over the whole land among the people. The trader, the apprentices, and poor of the cities,

the peasantry, had their own songs. They tended to collect themselves round some legendary name like Robin Hood, or some historical character made legendary, like Randolf, Earl of Chester. Sloth, in *Piers Plowman's Vision*, does not know his paternoster, but he does know the rimes of these heroes. A crowd of minstrels sang them through city and village. The very friar sang them "and made his Englissch swete upon his tunge." A collection of Robin Hood ballads was printed under the title *A Geste of Robyn Hode*, by Chepman and Myllar in Edinburgh, about 1506, and soon after as *A Lytel Geste of Robin Hood*, by Wynken de Worde. *The Nut Brown Maid*, about 1500–1502, *The Battle of Otterburn*, about 1460, and *Chevy Chase*, after 1460, belong to the end of 1400 and the beginning of 1500. It was not however till much later that any collection of ballads was made; and few, in the form we possess them, can be dated farther back than the reign of Elizabeth.

44. **Prose Literature.**—The work that Mandeville had begun as the first writer of new English prose, that Chaucer, and Wiclif assisted by Purvey and Hereford, had continued, was worthily carried on in the fifteenth century by four masters of English prose, Pecock, Mallory, Fortescue, and Caxton. The religious war between the Lollards and the Church raged during the reigns of Henry V. and Henry VI., and in the time of the latter REGINALD PECOCK took it out of Latin into homely English. He fought the Lollards with their own weapons, with public sermons in English, and with tracts in English; and after 1449, when Bishop of Chichester, published his work, *The Repressor of overmuch Blaming of the Clergy*. It pleased neither party. The Lollards disliked it because it defended the customs and doctrines of the Church. Churchmen burnt it because it agreed with the "Bible-men," that the Bible was the only rule of faith. Both abjured it because it said that doctrines

were to be proved from the Bible by reason. Pecock is the first of all the Church theologians who wrote in English, and the book is a fine example of our early prose.

SIR JOHN FORTESCUE'S book on the *Difference between Absolute and Limited Monarchy*, in Edward IV.'s reign, is less fine an example of the prose of English politics than SIR THOMAS MALORY'S *Le Morte d'Arthur* is of the prose of chivalry. This book, arranged and modelled into an epic from French and contemporary English materials, is the work of a man of genius, and was ended in the ninth year of Edward IV., fifteen years before Caxton had finished printing it. Its prose, in its staid simplicity, may well have charmed CAXTON, who printed it with all the care of one who "loved the noble acts of chivalry." Caxton's own work added to the prose of England. Born of Kentish parents, he went to the Low Countries in 1440, and learned his trade. The first book said to have been printed in this country was *The Game and Playe of the Chesse*, 1474. The first book that bears the inscription, "Imprynted by me, William Caxton, at Westmynstre," is *The Dictes and Sayings of Philosophers*. But the first English book Caxton made, and finished at Cologne in 1471, was his translation of the *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troy*, and in this book, and in his translation of *Reynard the Fox* from the Dutch, in his translation of the *Golden Legend*, and his re-editing of Trevisa's *Chronicle*, in which he "changed the rude and old English," he kept, by the fixing power of the press, the Midland English which Chaucer had established as the tongue of literature, from further degradation. Forty years later Tyndale's New Testament fixed it for ever as the standard English, and the Elizabethan writers kept it in its purity.

45. **Influences which laid the Foundations of the Elizabethan Literature.**—The first of these grew out of Caxton's work. John Shirley, a gentleman

of good family, and Chaucer's contemporary, who died, a very old man, in 1449, deserves mention as a transcriber and preserver of the works of Chaucer and Lydgate, but Caxton fulfilled the task Shirley had begun. He printed Chaucer and Lydgate and Gower with zealous care. He printed the *Chronicle of the Brut*, and Higden's *Polychronicon;* he secured for us the *Morte d'Arthur*. He had a tradesman's interest in publishing the romances, for they were the reading of the day; but he could scarcely have done better for the interests of the coming literature. These books nourished the imagination of England, and supplied poet after poet with fine subjects for work, or fine frames for their subjects. He had not a tradesman's, but a loving literary interest in printing the old English poets; and in sending them out from his press Caxton kept up the continuity of English poetry. The poets after him at once began on the models of Chaucer and Gower and Lydgate; and the books themselves being more widely read, not only made poets but a public that loved poetry. The imprinting of old English poetry was one of the sources in this century of the Elizabethan literature.

The second source was the growth of an interest in classic literature. All through the last two-thirds of this century, though so little creative work was done, the interest in that literature grew. The Wars of the Roses did not stop the reading of books. *The Paston Letters*, 1422—1505, the correspondence of a country family from Henry VI. to Henry VII., are pleasantly, even correctly written, and contain passages which refer to translations of the classics and to manuscripts sent to and fro for reading. A great number of French translations of the Latin classics were widely read in England. Henry VI., Edward IV., and some of the great nobles were lovers of books. Men like Duke Humphrey of Gloucester made libraries and brought over Italian scholars to England to translate Greek

works. There were fine scholars in England, like John, Lord Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, who had won fame in the schools of Italy, and whose translations of Cicero's *De Amicitiâ* and of Cæsar's *De Bello Gallico* prove, with his Latin letters, how worthy he was of the praise of Padua and the gratitude of Oxford. He added many MSS. to the library of Duke Humphrey. Many men, like Robert Flemmyng, Dean of Lincoln; John Gunthorpe, Dean of Wells; William Grey, Bishop of Ely; John Phreas, Provost of Balliol, William Sellynge, Fellow of All Souls, studied at Ferrara under Baptista Guarini, and collected MSS. in Italy of the classics, with which they enriched the libraries of England. There was therefore in England a swiftly-growing interest in the ancient writers.

46. **The Influence of the Italian Revival.**—Such an interest was made and deepened by the revival of letters which arose after 1453 in Italy, and we have seen that before the last two decades of the fifteenth century many Englishmen had gone to Italy to read and study the old Greek authors on whom the scholars driven from Constantinople by the Turks were lecturing in the schools of Florence. The New Learning increased in England, and passed on into the sixteenth century, until it decayed for a time in the violence of the religious struggle. But we had now begun to do our own work as translators of the classics, and the young English scholars whom the Italian revival had awakened filled year after year the land with English versions of the ancient writers of Rome and Greece. It is in this growing influence of the great classic models of literature that we find the gathering together of another of the sources of that great Elizabethan literature which seems to arise so suddenly, but which had, in reality, been long preparing.

47. **Prose under Henry VIII.**—The reigns of Richard III. and of Henry VII. brought forth no prose of any worth, but the country awakened from its dul-

ness with the accession of Henry VIII., 1509. John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, with William Lilly, the grammarian, set on foot a school where the classics were taught in a new and practical way, and between the year 1500 and the Reformation twenty grammar-schools were established. Erasmus, who had all the enthusiasm which sets others on fire, had come to England in 1497, and found Grocyn and Linacre at Oxford, teaching the Greek they had learnt from Chalcondylas at Florence. He learnt Greek from them, and found eager admiration of his own scholarship in Bishop Fisher, Sir Thomas More, Colet, and Archbishop Warham. From these men a liberal and moderate theology spread, which soon, however, perished in the heats of the Reformation. But the new learning they had started grew rapidly, assisted by the munificence of Wolsey; and Cambridge, under Cheke and Smith, excelled even Oxford in Greek learning. The study of the great classics set free the minds of men, stirred and gave life to letters, and woke up English prose from its sleep. Its earliest effort was its best. It was in 1513 (not printed till 1557) that THOMAS MORE wrote our first history in English, of Edward V.'s life and Richard III.'s usurpation. The simplicity of his genius showed itself in the style, and his wit in the picturesque method and the dramatic dialogue that graced the book. The stately historical step was laid aside by More in the tracts of nervous English with which he replied to Tyndale, but both his styles are remarkable for their purity. Of all the "strong words" he uses, three out of four are Teutonic. More's most famous work, the *Utopia*, 1516, was written in Latin, but was translated afterwards, in 1551, by Ralph Robinson. It tells us more of the curiosity the New Learning had awakened in Englishmen concerning all the problems of life, society, government, and religion, than any other book of the time. It is the representative book of that short but well-defined period which we

may call *English Renaissance before the Reformation.* Much of the progress of prose was due to the patronage of the young king. It was the king who asked Lord Berners to translate *Froissart*, a book which in 1523 made a landmark in our tongue. It was the king who supported Sir Thomas Elyot in his effort to improve education, and encouraged him to write books (1531-46) in the vulgar tongue that he might please his countrymen. It was the king who made Leland, our first English writer on antiquarian subjects, the "King's Antiquary," 1533. It was the king to whom Roger Ascham dedicated his first work, and who sent him abroad to pursue his studies. This book, the *Toxophilus*, or the *School of Shooting*, 1545, was written for the pleasure of the yeomen and gentlemen of England in their own tongue. Ascham apologises for this, and the apology marks the state of English prose. "Everything has been done excellently well in Greek and Latin, but in the English tongue so meanly that no man can do worse." But Ascham's quaint English has its charm, and he did not know that the very rudeness of language of which he complained was in reality laying the foundations of an English more Teutonic and less Latin than the English of Chaucer.

48. **Prose and the Reformation.**—The bigotry and the avarice and the violent controversy of the Reformation killed for a time the New Learning, but it did a vast work for English literature in its translation of the Bible. WILLIAM TYNDALE'S *Translation of the New Testament*, 1525, fixed our standard English once for all, and brought it finally into every English home. Tyndale held fast to pure English. In his two volumes of political tracts "there are only twelve Teutonic words which are now obsolete, a strong proof of the influence his translation of the Bible has had in preserving the old speech of England." Of the 6,000 words of the *Authorised Version*, still in a great

part his translation, only 250 are not now in common use. "Three out of four of his nouns, adverbs, and verbs are Teutonic." And he spoke sharply enough to those who said our tongue was so rude that the Bible could not be translated into it. "It is not so rude as they are false liars. For the Greek tongue agreeth more with the English than the Latin; a thousand parts better may it be translated into the English than into the Latin."

Tyndale was helped in his English Bible by William Roy, a runaway friar; and his friend Rogers, the first martyr in Queen Mary's reign, added the translation of the *Apocrypha*, and made up what was wanting in Tyndale's translation from Chronicles to Malachi out of Coverdale's translation. It was this Bible which, revised by Coverdale and edited and re-edited as *Cromwell's Bible*, 1539, and again as *Cranmer's Bible*, 1540, was set up in every parish church in England. It got north into Scotland and made the Lowland English more like the London English. It passed over to the Protestant settlements in Ireland. After its revisal in 1611 it went with the Puritan Fathers to New England and fixed the standard of English in America. Eighty millions of people now speak the English of Tyndale's Bible, and there is no book which has had so great an influence on the style of English literature and the standard of English Prose. In Edward VI.'s reign also Cranmer edited the *English Prayer Book*, 1549-52. Its English is a good deal mixed with Latin words, and its style is sometimes weak or heavy, but on the whole it is a fine example of stately prose. It also steadied our speech. LATIMER, on the contrary, whose *Sermon on the Ploughers* and others were delivered in 1549 and in 1552, wrote in a plain, shrewd style, which by its humour and rude directness made him the first preacher of his day. On the whole the Reformation fixed and confirmed our English tongue, but at the same time it brought

in through theology a large number of Latin words. The pairing of English and Latin words (*acknowledge* and *confess*, &c.) in the Prayer Book is a good example of both these results.

49. **Poetry in the Sixteenth Century under the Influence of Chaucer.**—We shall speak in this section only of the poets in England whose work was due to the publication of Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate by Caxton, and go back also to the Scotch poetry which owed itself to the impulse of Chaucer. After a short revival that influence died, and a new one entered from Italy into English verse in the poems of Surrey and Wyatt. The transition period between the one influence and the other is of great interest, and is connected with the names of Hawes and Skelton.

STEPHEN HAWES, in the reign of Henry VII., represented the transition by an imitation of the old work. Amid many poems, more imitative of Lydgate than of Chaucer, his long allegorical poem, entitled the *Pastime of Pleasure*, is the best. In fact, it is the first, since the middle of the fifteenth century, in which Imagination again began to plume her wings and soar. Within the realm of art, it corresponded to that effort to resuscitate the dead body of the Old Chivalry which Henry VIII. and Francis I. attempted. It goes back for its inspiration to the *Romance of the Rose*, and is an allegory of the right education of a knight, showing how Grand Amour won at last La Bel Pucell. But, like all false resurrections, it died quickly.

On the other hand, JOHN SKELTON represents the transition by at first following the old poetry, and then, pressed upon by the storm of human life in the present, by taking an original line. His imitative poetry belongs mostly to Henry VII.'s time, but when the religious and political disturbances began in Henry VIII.'s time, Skelton became excited by the cry of the

people for Church reformation. His poem, *Why come ye not to Court?* was a fierce satire on the great Cardinal. That of *Colin Clout* was the cry of the country Colin, and of the Clout or mechanic of the town against the corruption of the Church; and it represents the whole popular feeling of the time just before the movement of the Reformation took a new turn from the opposition of the Pope to Henry's divorce. Both are written in short "rude rayling rimes, pleasing only the popular ear," and Skelton chose them for that purpose. Both have a rough, impetuous power; their language is coarse, full even of slang, but Skelton could use any language he pleased. He was an admirable scholar. Erasmus calls him the "glory and light of English letters," and Caxton says that he improved our language. His poem, the *Bowge of Court* (rewards of court), is full of powerful satire against the corruption of the times, and of vivid impersonations of the virtues and vices. But he was not only the satirist. The pretty and new love lyrics that we owe to him foreshadow the Elizabethan imagination and life; and the *Boke of Phyllyp Sparowe*, which tells the grief of a nun called Jane Scrope for the death of her sparrow, in one of the gayest and most inventive poems in the language. Skelton stands quite alone between the decay of the direct influence of Chaucer, whose last true imitator he was, and the rise of a new Italian influence in England in the poems of Surrey and Wyatt. In his own special work he was entirely original, and standing thus between two periods of poetry, he is a kind of landmark in English literature. The *Ship of Fooles*, 1508, by Barclay, is of this time, but it has no value. It is a recast of a work published at Basel. It was popular because it attacked the follies and questions of the time. Its sole interest to us is in its pictures of familiar manners and popular customs. But Barclay did other work, and he was the first who brought the

eclogue into England. With him the transition time is over, and the curtain is ready to rise on the Elizabethan age of poetry. While we wait, we will make an interlude out of the work of the poets of Scotland.

SCOTTISH POETRY.

50. **Scottish Poetry** is poetry written in the English tongue by men living in Scotland. These men, though calling themselves Scotchmen, are of good English blood. But the blood, as I think, was mixed with an infusion of Celtic blood.

Old Northumbria extended from the Humber to the Firth of Forth, leaving however on its western border a line of unconquered land, which took in Lancashire, Cumberland, and Westmorland in our England, and, over the border, most of the western country between the Clyde and Solway Firth. This unconquered country was the Welsh kingdom of Strathclyde, and was dwelt in by the Celtic race. The present English part of it was soon conquered and the Celts driven out. But in the part to the north of the Solway Firth the Celts were not driven out. They remained, lived with the Englishmen who were settled over the old Northumbria, intermarried with them and became under Scot kings one mixed people. Literature in the Lowlands then would have Celtic elements in it; literature in England was purely Teutonic. The one sprang from a mixed, the other from an unmixed race. I draw attention to this, because it seems to me to account for certain peculiarities which, especially Celtic, are infused through the whole of Scottish poetry.

51. **Celtic Elements of Scottish Poetry.**—The first of these is *the love of wild nature for its own sake.* There is a passionate, close, and poetical observation and description of natural scenery in Scotland from the earliest times of its poetry, such

as we do not possess in English poetry till the time of Wordsworth. The second is *the love of colour*. All early Scottish poetry differs from English in the extraordinary way in which colour is insisted on, and at times in the lavish exaggeration of it. The third is *the wittier and coarser humour* in the Scottish poetry, which is distinctly Celtic in contrast with that humour which has its root in sadness and which belongs to the Teutonic races. Few things are really more different than the humour of Chaucer and the humour of Dunbar, than the humour of Cowper and the humour of Burns. These are the special Celtic elements in the Lowland poetry.

52. **Its National Elements** came into it from the circumstances under which Scotland rose into a separate kingdom. The first of these is the strong, almost fierce assertion of national life. The English were as national as the Scots, and felt the emotion of patriotism as strongly. But they had no need to assert it; they were not oppressed. But for nearly forty years the Scotch resisted for their very life the efforts of England to conquer them. And the war of freedom left its traces on their poetry from Barbour to Burns and Walter Scott in the almost obtrusive way in which Scotland, and Scottish liberty, and Scottish heroes are thrust forward in their verse. Their passionate nationality appears in another form in their descriptive poetry. The natural description of Chaucer, Shakspere, or even Milton, is not distinctively English. But in Scotland it is always the scenery of their own land that the poets describe. Even when they are imitating Chaucer they do not imitate his conventional landscape. They put in a Scotch landscape; and in the work of such men as Gawin Douglas the love of Scotland and the love of nature mingle their influences together to make him sit down, as it were, to paint, with his eye on everything he paints, a series of Scotch landscapes.

53. **Its Individual Element.**—There is one more special element in early Scotch poetry which arose, I think, out of its political circumstances. All through the struggle for freedom, carried on as it was at first by small bands under separate leaders till they all came together under a leader like Bruce, a much greater amount of individuality, and a greater habit of it, was created among the Scotch than among the English. Men fought for their own land and lived in their own way. Every little border chieftain, almost every border farmer was or felt himself to be his own master. The poets would be likely to share in this individual quality, and in spite of the overpowering influence of Chaucer, to strike out new veins of poetic thought and new methods of poetic expression. And this is what happened. Long before forms of poetry like the short pastoral or the fable had appeared in England, the Scottish poets had started them. They were less docile imitators than the English, but their work in the new forms they started was not so good as the after English work in the same forms.

54. The first of the Scottish poets, omitting Thomas of Erceldoune, is JOHN BARBOUR, Archbishop of Aberdeen. His long poem of *The Bruce*, 1375-7, represents the whole of the eager struggle for Scottish freedom against the English which closed at Bannockburn; and the national spirit, which I have mentioned, springs in it, full grown, into life. But it is temperate, it does not pass into the fury against England, which is so plain in writers like BLIND HARRY, who, about 1461, composed a long poem in the heroic couplet of Chaucer on the deeds of *William Wallace*. Barbour was often in England for the sake of study, and his patriotism though strong is tolerant of England. In Henry V.'s reign, ANDREW OF WYNTOUN wrote his *Oryginale Cronykil of Scotland*, one of the riming chronicles of the time. It is

only in the next poet that we find the influence of Chaucer, and it is hereafter continuous till the Elizabethan time. JAMES THE FIRST of Scotland was prisoner in England for nineteen years, till 1422. There he read Chaucer, and fell in love with Lady Jane Beaufort, niece of Henry IV. The poem which he wrote—*The King's Quhair* (the quire or book)—is done in imitation of Chaucer, and in Chaucer's seven-lined stanza, which from James's use of it is called Rime Royal. In six cantos, sweeter, tenderer, and purer than any verse till we come to Spenser, he describes the beginning of his love and its happy end. "I must write," he says, "so much because I have come so from Hell to Heaven." Nor did the flower of his love and hers ever fade. She defended him in the last ghastly scene of murder when his kingly life ended. Though imitative of Chaucer, his work has an original element in it. The natural description is more varied, the colour is more vivid, and there is a modern self-reflective quality, a touch of spiritual feeling which does not belong to Chaucer at all. The poems of *The Kirk on the Green* and *Peebles to the Play* have been attributed to him. If they be his, he originated a new vein of poetry, which Burns afterwards carried out — the comic and satirical ballad poem. But they are more likely to be by James V.

ROBERT HENRYSON, who died before 1508, a schoolmaster in Dunfermline, was also an imitator of Chaucer, and his *Testament of Cresseid* continues Chaucer's *Troilus*. But he set on foot two new forms of poetry. He made poems out of the *fables*. They differ entirely from the short, neat form in which Gay and La Fontaine treated the fable. They are long stories, full of pleasant dialogue, political allusions, and with elaborate morals attached to them. They have a peculiar Scottish tang, and are full of descriptions of Scotch scenery. He also began the short pastoral in his

Robin and Makyne. It is a natural, prettily-turned dialogue; and a flashing Celtic wit, such as charms us in *Duncan Grey*, runs through it. The individuality which struck out two original lines of poetic work in these poems appears again in his sketch of the graces of womanhood in the *Garment of Good Ladies;* a poem of the same type as those thoughtful lyrics which describe what is best in certain phases of professions, or of life, such as Sir H. Wotton's *Character of a Happy Life*, or Wordsworth's *Happy Warrior.*

But among many poets whom we need not mention, the greatest is WILLIAM DUNBAR. He carries the influence of Chaucer on to the end of the fifteenth century and into the sixteenth. Few have possessed a more masculine genius, and his work was as varied in its range as it was original. He followed the form and plan of Chaucer in his two poems of *The Thistle and the Rose*, 1503, and the *Golden Terge*, 1508, the first on the marriage of James IV. to Margaret Tudor, the second an allegory of Love, Beauty, Reason, and the poet. In both, though they begin with Chaucer's conventional May morning, the natural description becomes Scottish, and in both the national enthusiasm of the poet is strongly marked. But he soon ceased to imitate. The vigorous fun of the satires and the satirical ballads that he wrote is only matched by their coarseness, a coarseness and a fun that descended to Burns. Perhaps Dunbar's genius is still higher in a wild poem in which he personifies the seven deadly sins, and describes their dance, with a mixture of horror and humour which makes the little thing unique.

A man almost as remarkable as Dunbar is GAWIN DOUGLAS, Bishop of Dunkeld, who died in 1522, at the Court of Henry VIII., and was buried in the Savoy. He is the author of the first metrical English translation from the original of any Latin book. He translated Ovid's *Art of Love*, and afterwards, with

truth and spirit, the *Æneids* of Vergil, 1513. To each book of the *Æneid* he wrote a prologue of his own. And it is chiefly by these that he takes rank among the Scottish poets. Three of them are descriptions of the country in May, in Autumn, and in Winter. The scenery is altogether Scotch, and the few Chaucerisms that appear seem absurdly out of place in a picture of nature which is as close as if it had been done by Keats in his early time. The colour is superb, the landscape is described with an excessive detail, but it is not composed by any art into a whole. There is nothing like it in England till Thomson's *Seasons*, and Thomson was a Scotchman. Only the Celtic love of nature can account for the vast distance between work like this and contemporary work in England such as Skelton's. Of Douglas's other original work, one poem, the *Palace of Honour*, 1501, continues the influence of Chaucer.

There were a number of other Scottish poets who are all remembered by Dunbar in his *Lament for the Makars*, and praised by SIR DAVID LYNDSAY, whom it is best to mention in this place, because he still connects Scottish poetry with Chaucer. He was born about 1490, and is the last of the old Scottish school, and the most popular. He is the most popular because he is not only the Poet, but also the Reformer. His poem the *Dreme*, 1528, links him back to Chaucer. It is in the manner of the old poet. But its scenery is Scottish, and instead of the May morning of Chaucer, it opens on a winter's day of wind and sleet. The place is a cave over the sea, whence Lyndsay sees the weltering of the ocean. Chaucer goes to sleep over Ovid or Cicero, Lyndsay falls into a dream as he thinks of the "false world's instability," wavering like the sea waves. The difference marks not only the difference of the two countries, but the different natures of the men. Chaucer did not care much for the popular storms, and loved the

Court more than the Commonweal. Lyndsay in the *Dreme* and in two other poems—the *Complaint to the King*, and the *Testament of the King's Papyngo*—is absorbed in the evils and sorrows of the people, in the desire to reform the abuses of the Church, of the Court, of party, of the nobility. In 1539 his *Satire of the Three Estates*, a Morality interspersed with interludes, was represented before James V. at Linlithgow. It was first acted in 1535, and was a daring attack on the ignorance, profligacy, and exactions of the priesthood, on the vices and flattery of the favourites—"a mocking of abuses used in the country by diverse sorts of estates." A still bolder poem, and one thought so even by himself, is the *Monarchie*, 1553, his last work. Reformer as he was, he was more a social and political than a religious one. He bears the same relation to Knox as Langland did to Wiclif. When he was sixty-five years old he saw the fruits of his work. Ecclesiastical councils met to reform the Church. But the reform soon went beyond his temperate wishes. In 1557, the Reformation in Scotland was fairly launched, when in December the Congregation signed the Bond of Association. Lyndsay had died three years before; he is as much the reformer, as he is the poet, of a transition time. "Still his verse hath charms," but it was neither sweet nor imaginative. He had genuine satire, great moral breadth, much preaching power in verse, coarse, broad humour in plenty, and more dramatic power and invention than the rest of his fellows.

55. **Italian Influence: Wyatt and Surrey.**—While poetry under Skelton and Lyndsay became an instrument of reform, it revived as an art at the close of Henry VIII.'s reign in SIR THOMAS WYATT and the EARL OF SURREY. They were both Italian travellers, and in bringing back to England the inspiration they had gained from Petrarca they re-made English poetry. They are our first really modern

poets; the first who have anything of the modern manner. Though Italian in sentiment, their language is more English than Chaucer's, that is, they use fewer romance words. They handed down this purity of English to the Elizabethan poets, to Sackville, Spenser, and Shakspere. They introduced a new kind of poetry, the amourist poetry. The "AMOURISTS," as they are called, were poets who composed a series of poems on the subject of love — sonnets mingled with lyrical pieces after the manner of Petrarca, and in accord with the love philosophy he built on Plato. The *Hundred Passions* of Watson, the sonnets of Sidney, Shakspere, Spenser, and Drummond, are all poems of this kind, and the same impulse in a similar form appears in the sonnets of Rossetti and of Mrs. Browning. The subjects of Wyatt and Surrey were chiefly lyrical, and the fact that they imitated the same model has made some likeness between them. Like their personal characters, however, the poetry of Wyatt is the more thoughtful and the more strongly felt, but Surrey's has a sweeter movement and a livelier fancy. Both did this great thing for English verse—they chose an exquisite model, and in imitating it "corrected the ruggedness of English poetry." Such verse as Skelton's became impossible. A new standard was made below which the after poets could not fall. They also added new stanza measures to English verse, and enlarged in this way the "lyrical range." Surrey was the first, in his translation of the Second and Fourth Books of *Vergil's Æneid*, to use the ten syllabled, unrimed verse, which we now call **blank verse**. In his hands it is not worthy of praise; it had neither the true form nor harmony into which it grew afterwards. SACKVILLE, Lord Buckhurst, introduced it into drama; MARLOWE, in his *Tamburlaine*, made it the proper verse of the drama, and Shakspere, Beaumont, and Massinger used it splendidly. In plays it has a

special manner of its own; in poetry proper it was, we may say, not only created but perfected by Milton.

The new impulse thus given to poetry was all but arrested by the bigotry that prevailed during the reigns of Edward VI. and Mary, and all the work of the New Learning seemed to be useless. But Thomas Wilson's book in English on *Rhetoric and Logic* in 1553, and the publication of Thomas Tusser's *Pointes of Husbandrie* and of Tottel's *Miscellany of Uncertain Authors*, 1557, in the last years of Mary's reign, proved that something was stirring beneath the gloom. The latter book contained the poems of Surrey and Wyatt, and others by Grimoald, by Lord Vaux, and Lord Berners. The date should be remembered, for it is the first printed book of modern English poetry. It proves that men cared now more for the new than the old poets, that the time of imitation of Chaucer was over, and that of original creation begun. It ushers in the Elizabethan literature.

CHAPTER IV.

THE LITERATURE OF ELIZABETH'S REIGN, 1559—1603.

Sackville's *Mirror of Magistrates*, **1559**.—Lyly's *Euphues*.—Spenser's *Shepheardes Calender*, **1579**.—Sidney's *Arcadia*, **1580** — Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, **1594**. — Bacon's *Essays*, **1597**, Spenser born, **1552**; *Faerie Queen*, **1590-1595**; died, **1598**.—W. Warner's, S. Daniel's, M. Drayton's *historical poems*, **1595-1598**.—Sir J. Davies's and Lord Brooke's *philosophical poems*, **1599-1620**.

The Drama.—First Miracle Play, **1110**.—Interludes of J. Heywood, **1530**.—First English Comedy, **1540**?—First English Tragedy, **1562**.—First English Theatre, **1576**.—Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, **1587**.—Shakspere born, **1564**; *Love's Labour's Lost*, **1588**; *Merchant of Venice*, **1596**; *Hamlet*, **1602**; *Cymbeline*, **1610**; *Henry VIII.*, **1613**; died, **1616**. — Ben Jonson begins work, **1596**; dies, **1637**.—Beaumont and Fletcher in James I.'s reign.

Webster's first Play, **1612**.—Massinger begins, **1620**; dies, **1639**.—John Ford's first Play, **1629**.—James Shirley, last Elizabethan Dramatist, lives to **1666**; Theatre closed, **1642**; opens again, **1656**.

56. **Elizabethan Literature**, as a literature, may be said to begin with Surrey and Wyatt. But as their poems were published shortly before Elizabeth came to the throne, we date the beginning of the *early period* of Elizabethan literature from the year of her accession, 1559. That period lasted till 1579, and was followed by the great literary outburst of the days of Spenser and Shakspere. The apparent suddenness of this outburst has been an object of wonder. Men have searched for its causes, chiefly in the causes which led to the revival of learning, and no doubt these bore on England as they did on the whole of Europe. But we shall best seek its nearest causes in the work done

during the early years of Elizabeth, and in doing so we shall find that the outburst was not so sudden after all. It was preceded by a very various, plentiful, but inferior literature, in which new forms of poetry and prose-writing were tried, and new veins of thought opened, which were afterwards wrought out fully and splendidly. All the germs of the coming age are to be found in thesetwenty years. The outburst of a plant into flower seems sudden, but the whole growth of the plant has caused it, and the flowering of Elizabethan literature was the slow result of the growth of the previous literature and the influences that bore upon it.

57. **First Elizabethan Period, 1559-1579.**—(1.) The literary prose of the beginning of this time is represented by the *Scholemaster* of ASCHAM, published 1570. This book, which is on education, is the work of the scholar of the new learning of the reign of Henry VIII. who has lived on into another period. It is not, properly speaking, Elizabethan; it is like a stranger in a new land and among new manners.

(2.) Poetry is first represented by SACKVILLE, Lord Buckhurst. The *Mirror of Magistrates*, 1559, for which he wrote the *Induction* and one tale, is a poem on the model of Boccaccio's *Falls of Princes*, already imitated by Lydgate. Seven poets, along with Sackville, contributed tales to it, but his poem is the only one of any value. The *Induction* paints the poet's descent into Avernus, and his meeting with Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, whose fate he tells with a grave and inventive imagination. Being written in the manner and stanza of the elder poets, this poem has been called the transition between Lydgate and Spenser. But it does not truly belong to the old time; it is as modern as Spenser, and its allegorical representations are in the same manner as those of Spenser. GEORGE GASCOIGNE, whose satire, the *Steele Glas*, 1576, is our first long satirical poem, is

the best among a crowd of lesser poets who came after Sackville. They wrote legends, pieces on the wars and discoveries of the Englishmen of their day, epitaphs, epigrams, songs, sonnets, elegies, fables, and sets of love poems; and the best things they did were collected in a miscellany called the *Paradise of Dainty Devices*, in 1576. This book, with Tottel's, set on foot in the later years of Elizabeth a crowd of other miscellanies of poetry which were of great use to the poets. Lyrical poetry, and that which we may call "occasional poetry," were now fairly started. The popular *Ballads* took a wide range. The registers of the Stationers' Company prove that there was scarcely any event of the day, nor almost any controversy in literature, politics, religion, which was not the subject of verse, and of verse into which imagination strove to enter. The ballad may be said to have done the work of the modern weekly review. It stimulated and informed the intellectual life of England.

(3.) *Frequent translations* were now made from the classical writers. We know the names of more than twelve men who did this work, and there must have been many more. Already in Henry VIII.'s and Edward VI.'s time, ancient authors had been made English; and before 1579, Vergil, Ovid, Cicero, Demosthenes, and many Greek and Latin plays, were translated. Among the rest, Phaer's *Vergil*, 1562, Arthur Golding's *Ovid's Metam.* 1565, and George Turberville's *Hist. Epis. of Ovid*, 1567, are, and especially the first, remarkable. In this way the best models were brought before the English people, and it is in the influence of the spirit of Greek and Roman literature on literary form and execution that we are to find one of the most active causes of the greatness of the later Elizabethan literature. Nor were the old English poets neglected. Though Chaucer, and Lydgate, Langland and the rest, were no longer imitated in this time of fresh creation, they

were studied, and they added their impulse of life to original poets like Spenser.

(4.) *Theological Reform* stirred men to another kind of literary work. A great number of polemical ballads, and pamphlets, and plays issued every year from obscure presses and filled the land. Poets like George Gascoigne, and still more Barnaby Googe, represent in their work the hatred the young men had of the old religious system. It was a spirit which did not do much for literature, but it quickened the habit of composition, and made it easier. The Bible also became common property, and its language glided into all theological writing and gave it a literary tone; while the publication of John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* or *Book of Martyrs*, 1563, gave to the people all over England a book which, by its simple style, the ease of its story-telling, and its popular charm made the very peasants who heard it read feel what is meant by literature.

(5.) The *history* of the country and its manners was not neglected. A whole class of antiquarians wrote steadily, if with some dulness, on this subject. Grafton, Stow, Holinshed and others, at least supplied materials for the study and use of the historical dramatists.

(6.) The *love of stories* grew quickly. The old English tales and ballads were eagerly read and collected. Italian tales by various authors were translated and sown so broadcast over London by William Painter in his collection, *The Palace of Pleasure*, 1566, by George Turbervile, in his *Tragical Tales* in verse, and by others, that it is said they were to be bought at every bookstall. The Romances of Spain and Italy poured in, and *Amadis de Gaul*, and the companion romances the *Arcadia* of Sannazaro, and the *Ethiopian History*, were sources of books like Sidney's *Arcadia* and, with the classics, supplied materials for the pageants. A great number of

subjects for prose and poetry were thus made ready for literary men, and prose fiction became possible in English literature.

(7.) The *masques*, *pageants*, *interludes*, and *plays* that were written at this time are scarcely to be counted. At every great ceremonial, whenever the queen made a progress or visited one of the great lords or a university, at the houses of the nobility, and at the court on all important days, some obscure versifier, or a young scholar at the Inns of Court, at Oxford or at Cambridge, produced a masque or a pageant, or wrote or translated a play. The habit of play-writing became common; a kind of school, one might almost say a manufacture of plays, arose, which partly accounts for the rapid production, the excellence, and the multitude of plays that we find after 1576. Represented all over England, these masques, pageants, and dramas were seen by the people, who were thus accustomed to take an interest, though of an uneducated kind, in the larger drama that was to follow. The literary men on the other hand ransacked, in order to find subjects and scenes for their pageants, ancient and mediæval, magical, and modern literature, and many of them in doing so became fine scholars. The imagination of England was quickened and educated in this way, and as Biblical stories were also largely used, the images of oriental life were added to the materials of imagination.

(8.) Another influence bore on literature. It was that given by the *stories of the voyagers*, who, in the new commercial activity of the country, penetrated into strange lands, and saw the strange monsters and savages which the poets now added to the fairies, dwarfs, and giants of the Romances. Before 1579, books had been published on the north-west passage. Frobisher had made his voyages and Drake had started, to return in 1580 to amaze all England with the story of his sail round the world and of the riches

of the Spanish Main. We may trace everywhere in Elizabethan literature the impression made by the wonders told by the sailors and captains who explored and fought from the North Pole to the Southern Seas.

(9.) Lastly, we have proof that there was a large number of *persons writing who did not publish their works.* It was considered at this time, that to write for the public injured a man, and unless he were driven by poverty he kept his manuscript by him. But things were changed when a great genius like Spenser took the world by storm; when Lyly's *Euphues* enchanted the whole of court society; when a great gentleman like Sir Philip Sidney became a writer. Literature was made the fashion, and the disgrace being taken from it, the production became enormous. Manuscripts written and laid by were at once sent forth; and when the rush began it grew by its own force. Those who had previously been kept from writing by its unpopularity now took it up eagerly, and those who had written before wrote twice as much now. The great improvement also in literary quality is easily accounted for by this—that men strove to equal such work as Sidney's or Spenser's, and that a wider and more exacting criticism arose. Nor must one omit to say, that owing to this employment of life on so vast a number of subjects, and to the voyages, and to the new literatures searched into, and to the heat of theological strife, a multitude of new words streamed into the language, and enriched the vocabulary of imagination. Shakspere uses 15,000 words.

58. **The Later Literature of Elizabeth's Reign, 1579-1602,** begins with the publication of Lyly's *Euphues* and Spenser's *Shepheardes Calendar*, both in 1579, and with the writing of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* and his *Defence of Poetrie*, 1580–81. It will be best to leave the poem of Spenser aside till

we come to write of the poets. The *Euphues* and the *Arcadia* carried on the story-telling literature; the *Defence of Poetrie* created a new form of literature, that of criticism.

The *Euphues* was the work of JOHN LYLY, poet and dramatist. It is in two parts, *Euphues the Anatomie of Wit*, and *Euphues and his England*. In six years it ran through five editions, so great was its popularity. Its prose style is too poetic, but is admirable for its smoothness and charm, and its very faults were of use in softening the rudeness of previous prose. The story is long, and is more a loose framework into which Lyly could fit his thoughts on love, friendship, education, and religion, than a true story. The second part brings Euphues, the young Athenian, to England through Dover and Canterbury to London, and is filled up with two stories; and supplemented by *Euphues' Glass for Europe*. It made its mark because it fell in with all the fantastic and changeable life of the time. Its far-fetched conceits, its extravagance of gallantry, its endless metaphors from the classics and natural history, its curious and gorgeous descriptions of dress, and its pale imitation of chivalry, were all reflected in the life and talk and dress of the court of Elizabeth. It became the fashion to talk "Euphuism," and, like the *Utopia* of More, Lyly's book has created an English word.

The *Arcadia* was the work of SIR PHILIP SIDNEY, and though written in 1580, did not appear till after his death. It is more poetic in style than the *Euphues*, and Sidney himself, as he wrote it under the trees of Wilton, would have called it a pastoral poem. It is less the image of the time than of the man. We all know that bright and noble figure, the friend of Spenser, the lover of Stella, the last of the old knights, the poet, the critic, and the Christian, who, wounded to the death, gave up the cup of water to a dying

soldier. We find his whole spirit in the story of the *Arcadia*, in the first two books and part of the third, which alone were written by him. It is a romance mixed up with pastoral stories, after the fashion of the Spanish romances. The characters are real, but the story is confused by endless digressions. The sentiment is too fine and delicate for the world. The descriptions are picturesque and the sentences made as perfect as possible. A quaint or poetic thought or an epigram appear in every line. There is no real art in it, or in its prose. But it is so full of poetical thought that it became a mine into which poets dug for subjects.

59. **Criticism** began with Sidney's *Art of Poetrie.* Its style shows us that he felt how faulty the prose of the *Arcadia* was. The book made a new step in the creation of a dignified English prose. It is still too flowery, but in it the fantastic prose of his own *Arcadia* and of the *Euphues* dies. As criticism, it is chiefly concerned with poetry. It defends, against STEPHEN GOSSON'S *School of Abuse*, in which poetry and plays were attacked from the Puritan point of view, the nobler uses of poetry. Sackville, Surrey, and Spenser are praised, and the other poets made little of in its pages. It was followed by WEBBE'S *Discourse of English Poetrie* written "to stirre up some other of meet abilitie to bestow travell on the matter." Already the other was travailing, and the *Arte of English Poesie*, supposed to be written by GEORGE PUTTENHAM, was published in 1589. It is the most elaborate book on the whole subject in Elizabeth's reign, and it marks the strong interest now taken in poetry in the highest society that the author says he writes it "to help the courtiers and the gentlewomen of the court to write good poetry, that the art may become vulgar for all Englishmen's use."

60. **Later Prose Literature.**—(1.) *Theological Literature* remained for some years after 1580 only

a literature of pamphlets. Puritanism in its attack on the stage, and in the Martin Marprelate controversy upon episcopal government in the Church, flooded England with small books. Lord Bacon even joined in the latter controversy, and Nash the dramatist made himself famous in the war by the vigour and fierceness of his wit. Over this troubled sea rose at last the stately work of RICHARD HOOKER. It was in 1594 that the first four books of *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, a defence of the Church against the Puritans, were given to the world. Before his death he finished the other four. The book has remained ever since a standard work. It is as much moral and political as theological. Its style is grave, clear, and often musical. He adorned it with the figures of poetry, but he used them with temperance, and the grand and rolling rhetoric with which he often concludes an argument is kept for its right place. On the whole, it is the first monument of splendid literary prose that we possess.

(2.) We may place alongside of it, as the other great prose work of Elizabeth's later time, the development of *The Essay* in LORD BACON'S *Essays*, 1597. Their highest literary merit is their combination of charm and even of poetic prose with conciseness of expression and fulness of thought. The rest of Bacon's work belongs to the following reign.

(3.) *The Literature of Travel* was carried on by the publication in 1589 of HAKLUYT'S *Navigation, Voyages, and Discoveries of the English Nation.* The influence of a compilation of this kind, containing the great deeds of the English on the seas, has been felt ever since in the literature of fiction and poetry.

(4.) *In the Tales,* which poured out like a flood from the dramatists, from such men as Peele, and Lodge, and Greene, we find the origin of English fiction, and the subjects of many of our plays ; while the fantastic desire to revive the practices of chivalry

which was expressed in the *Arcadia*, found food in the continuous translation of romances, chiefly of the Charlemagne cycle, but now more from Spain than from France; and in the reading of the Italian poets, Boiardo, Tasso, and Ariosto, who supplied a crowd of our books with the machinery of magic, and with conventional descriptions of nature and of women's beauty.

61. **Edmund Spenser.**—The later Elizabethan poetry begins with the *Shepheardes Calendar* of Spenser. Spenser was born in London in 1552, and educated at the Merchant Taylors' Grammar School which he left for Cambridge in April, 1569. There seems to be evidence that in this year the *Sonnets of Petrarca* and the *Visions of Bellay*, afterwards published in 1591, were written by him for a miscellany of verse and prose issued by Vander Noodt, a refugee Flemish physician. At sixteen or seventeen then he began literary work. At college, Gabriel Harvey, a scholar and critic, and the *Hobbinoll* of Spenser's works, and Edward Kirke, the E. K. of the *Shepheardes Calendar*, were his friends. In 1576 he took his degree of M.A., and before he returned to London spent some time in the wilds of Lancashire, where he fell in love with the "Rosalind" of his poetry, a "fair widowe's daughter of the glen." His love was not returned, a rival interfered, but he clung fast until his marriage to this early passion. His disappointment drove him to the South, and there, 1579, he was made known through Leicester to Leicester's nephew, Philip Sidney. With him, and perhaps at Penshurst, the *Shepheardes Calendar* was finished for the press, and the *Faerie Queen* conceived. The publication of the former work made Spenser the first poet of the day, and so fresh and musical, and so abundant in new life were its twelve eclogues, that men felt that at last England had given birth to a poet as original as Chaucer. Each month

of the year had its own eclogue; some were concerned with his shattered love, two of them were fables, three of them satires on the lazy clergy; one was devoted to fair Eliza's praise. The others belong to rustic shepherd life. The English of Chaucer is imitated, but the work is full of a new spirit, and as Spenser had begun with translating *Petrarca*, so here, in two of the eclogues, he imitates Clement Marot. The "Puritanism" of the poem is the same as that of the *Faerie Queen*. Save in abhorrence of Rome, Spencer does not share in the politics of Puritanism. Nor does he separate himself from the world. He is as much at home in society and with the arts as any literary courtier of the day. He was Puritan in his attack on the sloth and pomp of the clergy; but his moral ideal, built up, as it was, out of Christianity and Platonism, rose far above the narrower ideal of Puritanism.

In the next year, 1580, he went to Ireland with Lord Grey of Wilton as secretary, and afterwards saw and learnt that condition of things which he described in his *View of the Present State of Ireland*. He was made Clerk of Degrees in the Court of Chancery in 1581, and Clerk of the Council of Munster in 1586, and it was then that the manor and castle of Kilcolman were granted to him. Here, at the foot of the Galtees, and bordered to the north by the wild country, the scenery of which fills the *Faerie Queen*, and in whose woods and savage places such adventures constantly took place in the service of Elizabeth as are recorded in the *Faerie Queen*, the first three books of that great poem were written.

62. **The Faerie Queen.**—The plan of the poem, so impossible to discover from the poem itself, is described in Spenser's prefatory letter to Raleigh. The twelve books were to tell the warfare of twelve Knights, in whom the twelve virtues of Aristotle were represented; and their warfare was against the vices

and errors, impersonated, which opposed those virtues. In Arthur, the Prince—for the machinery of the poem is from the old Celtic story—the Magnificence of the whole of virtue is represented, and he was at last to unite himself in marriage to the Faerie Queen, that divine glory of God to which all human act and thought aspired. Six books of this plan were finished; the legends of Holiness, Temperance, and Chastity, of Friendship, Justice, and Courtesy. The two posthumous cantos on Mutability seem to have been part of the seventh legend, on Constancy. Alongside of the spiritual allegory is the historical one, in which Elizabeth is Gloriana, and Mary of Scotland is Duessa, and Leicester, and at times Sidney, is Prince Arthur, and Arthegall is Lord Grey, and Raleigh is Timias, and Philip II. the Soldan, or Grantorto. In the midst, other allegories slip in, referring to events of the day, and Elizabeth becomes Belphœbe and Britomart, and Mary is Radegund, and Sidney is Calidore, and Alençon is Braggadochio. The dreadful "justice" done in Ireland, by the "iron man," and the wars in Belgium, and Norfolk's conspiracy, and the Armada, and the trial of Mary are also shadowed forth.

The allegory is clear in the first two books. Afterwards it is troubled with digressions, sub-allegories, genealogies, with anything that Spenser's fancy led him to introduce. Stories are dropt and never taken up again, and the whole tale is so tangled that it loses the interest of narrative. But it retains the interest of exquisite allegory. It is the poem of the noble powers of the human soul struggling towards union with God, and warring against all the forms of evil; and these powers become real personages, whose lives and battles Spenser tells in verse so musical and so gliding, so delicately wrought, so rich in imaginative ornament, and so inspired with the finer life of beauty, that he has been called the poets' Poet. Descriptions like those of the House of Pride and the Mask of

Cupid, and of the Months, are so vivid in form and colour, that they have always made subjects for artists; while the allegorical personages are, to the very last detail, wrought out by an imagination which describes not only the general character, but the special characteristics of the Virtues or the Vices, of the Months of the year, or of the Rivers of England. In its ideal whole, the poem represents the new love of chivalry, of classical learning; the delight in mystic theories of love and religion, in allegorical schemes, in splendid spectacles and pageants, in wild adventure; the love of England, the hatred of Spain, the strange worship of the Queen, even Spenser's own new love. It takes up and uses the popular legends of fairies, dwarfs, and giants, all the machinery of the Italian epics, and mingles them up with the wild scenery of Ireland and the savages and wonders of the New World. Almost the whole spirit of the Renaissance under Elizabeth, except its coarser and baser elements, is in its pages. Of anything impure, or ugly, or violent, there is no trace. And Spenser adds to all his own sacred love of love, his own pre-eminent sense of the loveliness of loveliness, walking through the whole of this woven world of faerie—

"With the moon's beauty and the moon's soft pace."

The first three books were finished in Ireland, and Raleigh listened to them in 1589 at Kilcolman Castle, among the alder shades of the river Mulla that fed the lake below the castle. Delighted with the poem, he brought Spenser to England, and the Queen, the court, and the whole of England soon shared in Raleigh's delight. It was the first great ideal poem that England had produced, and it is the source of all our modern poetry. It has never ceased to make poets, and it will live, as he said in his dedication to the Queen, "with the eternitie of her fame."

63. **Spenser's Minor Poems.**—The next year, 1591, Spenser being still in England, collected his smaller poems and published them. Among them *Mother Hubbard's Tale* is a remarkable satire, somewhat in the manner of Chaucer, on society, on the evils of a beggar soldiery, of the Church, of the court, and of misgovernment. The *Ruins of Time*, and still more the *Tears of the Muses*, support the statement that literature was looked on coldly previous to 1580. Sidney had died in 1586, and three of these poems bemoan his death. The others are of slight importance, and the whole collection was entitled *Complaints*. Returning to Ireland, he gave an account of his visit and of the court of Elizabeth in *Colin Clout's come Home again*, 1591, and at last, after more than a year's pursuit, won his second love for his wife, and found with her perfect happiness. A long series of *Sonnets* records the progress of his wooing, and the *Epithalamium*, his marriage hymn, is the most glorious love-song in the English tongue. At the close of 1595 he brought to England in a second visit the last three books of the *Faerie Queen*. The next year he spent in London, and published these books along with the *Prothalamion* on the marriage of Lord Worcester's daughters, the *Daphnaïda*, and the Hymns *on Love and Beauty* and *on Heavenly Love and Beauty*. The two first hymns were written in his youth; the two others, now written, enshrine that love philosophy of Petrarca which makes earthly love find its end in the love of God. The close of his life was sorrowful. In 1598, Tyrone's rebellion drove him out of Ireland. Kilcolman was sacked and burnt, one of his children perished in the flames, and Spenser and his family fled for their lives to England. Broken-hearted, poor, but not forgotten, the poet died in a London tavern. All his fellows went with his body to the grave, where, close by Chaucer, he lies in Westminster Abbey. London, "his most kindly nurse,"

takes care also of his dust, and England keeps him in her love.

64. **Later Elizabethan Poetry: Translations.**—There are three translators that take literary rank among the crowd that carried on the work of the earlier time. Two mark the influence of Italy, one the more powerful influence of the Greek spirit. SIR JOHN HARINGTON in 1591 translated Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, FAIRFAX in 1600 translated Tasso's *Jerusalem*, and his book is "one of the glories of Elizabeth's reign." But the noblest *translation* is that *of Homer's* whole work by GEORGE CHAPMAN, the dramatist, the first part of which appeared in 1598. The vivid life and energy of the time, its creative power and its force, are expressed in this poem, which is "more an Elizabethan tale written about Achilles and Ulysses" than a translation. The rushing gallop of the long fourteen-syllable stanza in which it is written has the fire and swiftness of Homer, but it has not his directness or dignity. Its "inconquerable quaintness" and diffuseness are as unlike the pure form and light and measure of Greek work as possible. But it is a distinct poem of such power that it will excite and delight all lovers of poetry, as it excited and delighted Keats. John Florio's *Translation of the Essays of Montaigne*, 1603, is also, though in prose, to be mentioned here, because Shakspere used the book, and because we must trace Montaigne's influence on English literature even before his retranslation by Charles Cotton.

The Four Phases of Poetry after 1580.—Spenser reflected in his poems the romantic spirit of the English Renaissance. The other poetry of Elizabeth's reign reflected the whole of English Life. The best way to arrange it—omitting as yet the Drama—is in an order parallel to the growth of the national life, and the proof that it is the best way is, that on the whole such an order is a true

chronological order. *First* then, if we compare England after 1580, as writers have often done, to an ardent youth, we shall find in the poetry of the first years that followed that date all the elements of youth. It is a poetry of love, and romance, and imagination. *Secondly*, and later on, when Englishmen grew older in feeling, their enthusiasm, which had flitted here and there in action and literature over all kinds of subjects, settled down into a steady enthusiasm for England itself. The country entered on its early manhood, and parallel with this there is the great outburst of historical plays, and a set of poets whom I will call the Patriotic Poets. *Thirdly*, and later still, the fire and strength of the people, becoming inward, resulted in a graver and more thoughtful national life, and parallel with this are the tragedies of Shakspere and the poets who have been called philosophical. These three classes of Poets overlapped one another, and grew up gradually, but on the whole their succession is the image of a real succession of national thought and emotion.

A *fourth* and separate phase does not represent, as these do, a new national life, a new religion, and new politics, but the despairing struggle of the old faith against the new. There were numbers of men, such as Wordsworth has finely sketched in old Norton in the *Doe of Rylstone*, who vainly and sorrowfully strove against all the new national elements. ROBERT SOUTHWELL, of Norfolk, a Jesuit priest, was the poet of Roman Catholic England. Imprisoned for three years, racked ten times, and finally executed, he wrote, while confessor to Lady Arundel, a number of poems published at various intervals and finally collected under the title, *St. Peter's Complaint, Mary Magdalen's Tears, with other works of the Author, R.S.* The *Mæoniæ*, and a short prose work *Marie Magdalen's Funerall Tears*, became also very popular. It marks not only the large Roman Catholic element in the country,

but also the strange contrasts of the time that eleven editions of books with these titles were published between 1595 and 1609, at a time when the *Venus and Adonis* of Shakspere led the way for a multitude of poems that sung of love and delight and England s glory.

65. **The Love Poetry.**—I have called it by this name because all its best work (to be found in the first book of Mr. Palgrave's "Golden Treasury") is almost limited to that subject—the subject of youth. It is chiefly composed in the form of songs and sonnets, and much of it was published in miscellanies in and after 1600. The most famous of these, in which men like Nicholas Breton, Henry Constable, Richard Barnefield and others wrote, are *England's Helicon*, and *Davison's Rhapsody* and the *Passionate Pilgrim*. The best of the songs are "old and plain, and dallying with the innocence of love," childlike in their natural sweetness and freshness, but full also of a southern ardour of passion when they treat of love. The greater part however have the intemperance as well as the phantasy of a youthful poetry. Shakspere's excel the others in their firm reality, their exquisite ease, and when in the plays, gain a new beauty from their fitness to their dramatic place. Others possess a quaint pastoralism like shepherd life in porcelain, such as Marlowe's well-known song, "Come live with me, and be my love;" others a splendour of love and beauty as in Lodge's *Song of Rosaline*, and Spenser's on his marriage. The sonnets were written chiefly in series, and I have already said that such writers are called amourists. Such were Shakspere's and the *Amoretti* of Spenser, and those *to Diana* by Constable. They were sometimes mixed with Canzones and Ballatas after the Italian manner, and the best of them were a series by Sir Philip Sidney. A number of other sonnets and of longer love poems were written by the dramatists before Shakspere, by

Peele and Greene and Marlowe and Lodge, far the finest being the *Hero and Leander*, which Marlowe left as a fragment to be completed by Chapman. Mingled up with these were small religious poems, the reflection of the Puritan and the more religious Church element in English society. They were collected under such titles as the *Handful of Honeysuckles*, the *Poor Widow's Mite*, *Psalms and Sonnets*, and there are some good things among them written by William Hunnis.

In one Scotch poet, WILLIAM DRUMMOND of Hawthornden, the friend of Ben Jonson, the love poet and the religious poet were united. I mention him here, though his work properly belongs to the reign of James I., because his poetry really goes back in spirit and feeling to this time. He cannot be counted among the true Scottish poets. Drummond is Elizabethan and English, and he is worthy to be named among the lyrical poets below Spenser and Shakspere. His love sonnets have some of the grace of Sidney's, and less quaintness; his songs have often the grave simplicity of Wyat, and his religious poems, especially one solemn sonnet on John the Baptist, have a distant resemblance to the grandeur of Milton.

66. **The Patriotic Poets.**—Among all this poetry of Romance, Chivalry, Religion, and Love, rose a poetry which devoted itself to the glory of England. It was chiefly historical, and as it may be said to have had its germ in the *Mirror of Magistrates*, so it had its perfect flower in the historical drama of Shakspere. Men had now begun to have a great pride in England. She had stepped into the foremost rank, had outwitted France, subdued internal foes, beaten and humbled Spain on every sea. Hence the history of the land became precious, and the very rivers and hills and plains honourable, and to be sung and praised in verse. This poetic impulse is best represented in the works of three men—WILLIAM WARNER, SAMUEL

DANIEL, and MICHAEL DRAYTON. Born within a few years of each other, about 1560, they all lived beyond the century, and the national poetry they set on foot lasted when the romantic poetry died.

William Warner's great book was *Albion's England*, 1586, a history of England in verse from the Deluge to Queen Elizabeth. It is clever, humorous, crowded with stories, and runs to 10,000 lines. Its popularity was great, and the English in which it was written deserved it. Such stories as *Argentile and Curan*, and the *Patient Countess*, prove him to have had a true and pathetic vein of poetry. His English is not however better than that of "well-languaged Daniel," who, among tragedies and pastoral comedies, some noble sonnets and poems of pure fancy, wrote in verse a prosaic *History of the Civil Wars*, 1595. Spenser saw in him a new "shepherd" of poetry who did far surpass the others, and Coleridge says that the style of his *Hymen's Triumph* may be declared "imperishable English." Of the three the greatest poet was Drayton. Two historical poems are his work—the *Civil Wars of Edward II. and the Barons*, and *England's Heroical Epistles*, 1598. Not content with these, he set himself to glorify the whole of his land in the *Polyolbion*, thirty books, and nearly 100,000 lines. It is a description in Alexandrines of the "tracts, mountains, forests, and other parts of this renowned isle of Britain, with intermixture of the most remarkable stories, antiquities, wonders, pleasures, and commodities of the same, digested into a poem." It was not a success, though it deserved success. Its great length was against it, but the real reason was that this kind of poetry had had its day. It appeared in 1613, in James I.'s reign.

67. **Philosophical Poets.**—Before that time a change had come. As the patriotic poets came after the romantic, so the romantic were followed by the philosophical poets. The land was settled;

enterprise ceased to be the first thing; men sat down to think, and in poetry questions of religious and political philosophy were treated with "sententious reasoning, grave, subtle, and condensed." Shakspere, in his passage from comedy to tragedy, in 1601, illustrates this change. The two poets who represent it are SIR JNO. DAVIES and FULKE GREVILLE, Lord Brooke. In Davies himself we find an instance of it. His earlier poem of the *Orchestra*, 1596, in which the whole world is explained as a dance, is as exultant as Spenser. His later poem, 1599, is compact and vigorous reasoning, for the most part without fancy. Its very title, *Nosce te ipsum*—Know Thyself—and its divisions, 1. "On humane learning," 2. "The immortality of the soul"—mark the alteration. Two little poems, one of Bacon's, on the *Life of Man*, as a bubble, and one of SIR HENRY WOTTON'S, on the *Character of a Happy Life*, are instances of the same change. It is still more marked in Lord Brooke's long, obscure poems *On Human Learning, on Wars, on Monarchy, and on Religion.* They are political and historical treatises, not poems, and all in them, says Lamb, "is made frozen and rigid by intellect." Apart from poetry, "they are worth notice as an indication of that thinking spirit on political science which was to produce the riper speculations of Hobbes, Harrington, and Locke." We turn now to the Drama, which includes all these different forms of poetry.

THE DRAMA.

68. **Early Dramatic Representation in England.**—The drama, as in Greece, so in England, began in religion. In early times none but the clergy could read the stories of their religion, and it was not the custom to deliver sermons to the people. It was necessary to instruct uneducated men in the history of the

Bible, the Christian faith, the lives of the Saints and Martyrs. Hence the Church set on foot miracle plays and mysteries. We find these first in England about 1110, when Geoffrey, afterwards Abbot of St. Alban's, prepared his miracle play of St. Catherine for acting. Such plays became more frequent from the time of Henry II., and they were so common in Chaucer's days that they were the resort of idle gossips in Lent. The wife of Bath went to "plays of miracles, and marriages." They were acted not only by the clergy, but by the laity. About the year 1268 the town guilds began to take them into their own hands, and acted complete sets of plays, setting forth the whole of Scripture history from the Creation to the Day of Judgment. Each guild took one play in the set. They lasted sometimes three days, sometimes eight, and were represented on a great movable stage on wheels in the open spaces of the towns. Of these sets we have three remaining, the Towneley, Coventry, and Chester plays: 1300—1600. The first set has 32, the second 42, and the third 25 plays.

69. **The Miracle Play** was a representation of some portion of Scripture history, or of the life of some Saint of the Church. The **Mystery** was a representation of any portion of the New Testament history concerned with a mysterious subject, such as the Incarnation, the Atonement or the Resurrection. It has been attempted to distinguish these more particularly, but they are mingled together in England into one. From the towns they went to the court and the houses of nobles. The Kings kept players of them, and we know that exhibiting Scripture plays at great festivals was part of the domestic regulations of the great houses, and that it was the Chaplain's business to write them. Their "Dumb Show" and their "Chorus" leave their trace in the regular drama. We cannot say that the modern drama arose after them, for it came in before they died out in England.

They were still acted in Chester in 1577, and in Coventry in 1580.

70. **The Morality** was the next step to these, and in it we come to a representation which is closely connected with the drama. It was a play in which the characters were the Vices and Virtues, with the addition afterwards of allegorical personages, such as Riches, Good Deeds, Confession, Death, and any human condition or quality needed for the play. These characters were brought together in a rough story, at the end of which Virtue triumphed, or some moral principle was established. The later dramatic *fool* grew up in the Moralities out of a personage called "The Vice," and the humorous element was introduced by the retaining of "The Devil" from the Miracle play and by making *the Vice* torment him. They were contiunally represented, but finally died out about the end of Elizabeth's reign.

71. **The Transition between these and the regular Drama** may possibly be traced in this way. The Virtues and Vices were dull because they stirred no human sympathy. Historical characters were therefore then introduced, who were celebrated for a virtue or a vice; Brutus represented patriotism, Aristides represented justice; or, as in Bale's *Kynge Johan*, historical and allegorical personages were mixed together. But it seems best to say that the regular drama arose independently, as soon as the English had classical and Italian models to work from. Still, there was a transition of some kind, and it was hastened by the impulse of the Reformation. The religious struggle came so home to men's hearts that they were not satisfied with subjects drawn from the past, and the Morality was used to support the Catholic or the Protestant side. Real men and women were shown under the thin cloaks of its allegorical characters; the vices and the follies of the time were displayed. It started our satiric comedy. The stage was becoming

a living power when this began. The excitement of the audience was now very different from that felt in listening to Virtues and Vices, and a demand arose for a comedy and tragedy which should picture human life in all its forms. The *Interludes* of JOHN HEYWOOD, most of which were written for court representation in Henry VIII.'s time—1530, 1540—represent this further transition. They differed from the Morality in that most of the characters were drawn from real life, but they retained "the Vice" as a personage. The Interlude—a short, humorous piece, to be acted in the midst of the Morality for the amusement of the people—had been frequently used, but Heywood isolated it from the Morality and made of it a kind of farce. Out of it we may say grew English comedy.

72. **The First Stage of the regular Drama** begins with the first English comedy, *Ralph Roister Doister*, written by NICHOLAS UDALL, master of Eton, known to have been acted before 1551, but not published till 1566. It is our earliest picture of London manners; the characters are well drawn; it is divided into regular acts and scenes, and is made in rime. The first English tragedy is *Gorboduc*, or *Ferrex and Porrex*, written by Sackville and Norton, and represented in 1562. The story was taken from British legend, and the characters are gravely sustained. But the piece was heavy and too solemn for the audience, and Richard Edwards, by mixing tragic and comic elements together in his play, *Damon and Pythias*, acted about 1564, succeeded better. These two gave the impulse to a number of dramas from classical and modern story, which were acted at the Universities, Inns of Court, and the court up to 1580, when the drama, having gone through its boyhood, entered on a vigorous manhood. More than fifty-two dramas, so quick was their production, are known to have been acted up to this time. Some were translated from the Greek, as the *Jocasta* from Euripides, and others from

the Italian, as the *Supposes* from Ariosto, both by the same author, George Gascoigne, already mentioned as a satirist. These were acted in 1566. Italian stories were soon taken as subjects, one example of which is Arthur Brooke's *Romeo and Juliet.* The Chronicle Histories of England afforded other tragic subjects, as T. Hughes' *Misfortunes of Arthur*, and the *Famous Victories of Henry V.;* and Comedy, falling in with classical and Italian plays, such as the *Supposes*, rapidly developed itself.

73. **The Theatre.**—There was as yet no theatre. A patent was given in 1574 to the Earl of Leicester's servants to act plays in any town in England, and they built in 1576 the Blackfriars Theatre. In the same year two others were set up in the fields about Shoreditch—"The Theatre" and "The Curtain." The Globe Theatre, built for Shakspere and his fellows in 1599, may stand as a type of the rest. In the form of a hexagon outside, it was circular within, and open to the weather, except above the stage. The play began at three o'clock; the nobles and ladies sat in boxes or in stools on the stage, the people stood in the pit or yard. The stage itself, strewn with rushes, was a naked room, with a blanket for a curtain. Wooden imitations of animals, towers, woods, &c., were all the scenery used, and a board, stating the place of action, was hung out from the top when the scene changed. Boys acted the female parts. It was only after the Restoration that moveable scenery and actresses were introduced. No "pencil's aid" supplied the landscape of Shakspere's plays. The forest of Arden, the castle of Duncan, were "seen only by the intellectual eye."

74. **The Second Stage of the Drama** ranges from 1580 to 1596. It includes the work of Lyly (author of the *Euphues*), the plays of Peele, Greene, Lodge, Marlowe, Kyd, Munday, Chettle, Nash, and the earliest works of Shakspere. During this time

we know that more than 100 different plays were performed by four out of the eleven companies; so swift and plentiful was their production. They were written in prose, and in rime, and in blank verse mixed with prose and rime. Prose and rime prevailed before 1587, when Marlowe in his play of *Tamburlaine* made blank verse the fashion. JOHN LYLY illustrates the three methods, for he wrote seven plays in prose, one in rime, and one (after *Tamburlaine*) in blank verse. We may say that, in "adopting Gascoigne's innovation of writing plays in prose, he did his best service to dramatic literature." Some beautiful little songs scattered through them are the forerunners of the songs with which Shakspere illumined his dramas, and the witty "quips and cranks," repartees and similes of their fantastic prose dialogue were the school of Shakspere's prose dialogue. PEELE, GREENE, and MARLOWE are the three important names of the period. They are the first in whose hands the play of human passion and action is expressed with any true dramatic effect. Peele and Greene make their characters act on, and draw out, one another in the several scenes, but they have no power of making a plot, or of working out their plays, scene by scene, to a natural conclusion. They are, in one word, without art, and their characters, even when they talk in good poetry, are neither natural nor simple. Yet, he would be unwise, and would lose much pleasure, who should not read their works.

CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE, on the other hand, rose by degrees and easily into mastery of his art. The difference between the unequal and violent action and thought of his *Doctor Faustus*, and the quiet and orderly progression to its end of the play of *Edward II.*, is all the more remarkable when we know that he died at thirty. Though less than Shakspere, he was worthy to precede him. As he may be said to have invented and made the verse of

the drama, so he created the English tragic drama. His plays are wrought with skill to their end, his characters are sharply and strongly outlined. Each play illustrates one ruling passion, in its growth, its power, and its extremes. *Tamburlaine* paints the desire of universal empire; the *Jew of Malta*, the passions of greed and hatred; *Doctor Faustus*, the struggle and failure of man to possess all knowledge and all pleasure without toil and without law; *Edward II.*, the misery of weakness and the agony of a king's ruin. Marlowe's verse is "mighty," his poetry strong and weak alike with passionate feeling, and overwrought into an intemperate magnificence of words and images. It reflects his life and the lives of those with whom he wrote. Marlowe lived and died an irreligious, imaginative, tender-hearted, licentious poet. Peele and Greene lived an even more riotous life and died as miserably, and they are examples of a crowd of other dramatists who passed their lives between the theatre, the wine-shop, and the prison. Their drama, in which we see the better side of the men, had all the marks of a wild youth. It was daring, full of strong but unequal life, romantic, sometimes savage, often tender, always exaggerated in its treatment and expression of the human passions. If it had no moderation, it had no tame dulness. If it was coarse, it was powerful, and it was above all national. It was a time full of strange contrasts, a time of fiery action and of sentimental contemplation; a time of fancy and chivalry, indelicacy and buffoonery; of great national adventure and private brawls, of literary quiet and polemic thought; of faith and infidelity—and the whole of it is painted with truth, but with too glaring colours, in the drama of these men.

75. **William Shakspere**, the greatest dramatist of the world, now took up the work of Marlowe, and in twenty-eight years made the drama represent the whole of human life. He was baptised April 26, 1564,

and was the son of a comfortable burgess of Stratford-on-Avon. While he was still young his father fell into poverty, and an interrupted education left him an inferior scholar. "He had small Latin and less Greek;" but he had vast store of English.[1]

By dint then of genius and by living in a society in which every kind of information was attainable, he became an accomplished man. The story told of his deer-stealing in Charlecote woods is without proof, but it is likely that his youth was wild and passionate. At nineteen he married Anne Hathaway, more than seven years older than himself, and was probably unhappy with her. For this reason, or from poverty, or from the driving of the genius that led him to the stage, he left Stratford about 1586–7, and came to London at the age of twenty-two years, and falling in with Marlowe, Greene, and the rest, became an actor and playwright, and may have lived their unrestrained and riotous life for some years.

76. **His First Period.**—It is probable that before leaving Stratford he had sketched a part at least of his *Venus and Adonis*. It is full of the country sights and sounds, of the ways of birds and animals, such as he saw when wandering in Charlecote woods. Its rich and overladen poetry and its warm colouring made him, when it was published, 1591–3, at once the favourite of men like Lord Southampton and lifted him into fame. But before that date he had done work for the stage by touching up old plays, and writing new ones. We seem to trace his "prentice hand" in many dramas of the time, but the first he is usually thought to have retouched is *Titus Andronicus*, and some time after the *First Part of Henry VI.* *Love's Labour's Lost*, the first of his original plays, in

[1] He uses 15,000 words, and he wrote pure English. Out of every five verbs, adverbs, and nouns (*e.g.* in the last act of *Othello*) four are Teutonic; and he is more Teutonic in comedy than in tragedy.

which he quizzed and excelled the Euphuists in wit, was followed by the involved and rapid farce of the *Comedy of Errors*. Out of these frolics of intellect and action he passed into pure poetry in the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and mingled into fantastic beauty the classic legend, the mediæval fairyland, and the clownish life of the English mechanic. Italian story then laid its charm upon him, and the *Two Gentlemen of Verona* preceded the southern glow of passion in *Romeo and Juliet*, in which he first reached tragic power. They complete, with *Love's Labour's Won*, afterwards recast as *All's Well that Ends Well*, the love plays of his early period. We may perhaps add to them the second act of an older play, *Edward III.* We should certainly read along with them, as belonging to the same period, his *Rape of Lucrece*, a poem finally printed in 1594, one year later than the *Venus and Adonis*, which was probably finished, if not wholly written, at this passionate time.

The same poetic succession we have traced in the poets is now found in Shakspere. The patriotic feeling of England, also represented in Marlowe and Peele, now seized on him, and he turned from love to begin his great series of historical plays with *Richard II.*, 1593—4. *Richard III.* followed quickly. To introduce it and to complete the subject, he recast the *Second and Third Parts of Henry VI.* (written by some unknown authors) and ended his first period by *King John;* five plays in a little more than two years.

77. **His Second Period, 1596—1601.**—In the *Merchant of Venice* Shakspere reached entire mastery over his art. A mingled woof of tragic and comic threads is brought to its highest point of colour when Portia and Shylock meet in court. Pure comedy followed in his retouch of the old *Taming of the Shrew*, and all the wit of the world mixed with noble history met next in the three comedies of *Falstaff*, the first

and second *Henry IV.* and the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. The historical plays were then closed with *Henry V.*; a splendid dramatic song to the glory of England. The Globe Theatre, in which he was one of the proprietors, was built in 1599. In the comedies he wrote for it, Shakspere turned to write of love again, not to touch its deeper passion as before, but to play with it in all its lighter phases. The flashing dialogue of *Much Ado About Nothing* was followed by the far-off forest world of *As You Like It*, where "the time fleets carelessly," and Rosalind's character is the play. Amid all its gracious lightness steals in a new element, and the melancholy of Jaques is the first touch we have of the older Shakspere who had "gained his experience, and whose experience had made him sad." As yet it was but a touch; *Twelfth Night* shows no trace of it, though the play that followed, *All's Well that Ends Well*, again strikes a sadder note. We find this sadness fully grown in the later *Sonnets*, which are said to have been finished about 1602. We know that some of the *Sonnets* existed in 1598, but they were all printed together for the first time in 1609.

Shakspere's life changed now, and his mind changed with it. He had grown wealthy during this period, famous, and loved by society. He was the friend of the Earls of Southampton and Essex, and of William Herbert, Lord Pembroke. The Queen patronised him; all the best literary society was his own. He had rescued his father from poverty, bought the best house in Stratford and much land, and was a man of wealth and comfort. Suddenly all his life seems to have grown dark. His best friends fell into ruin, Essex perished on the scaffold, Southampton went to the Tower, Pembroke was banished from the court; he may himself, as some have thought, have been concerned in the rising of Essex. Added to this, we may conjecture, from the imaginative pageantry

of the sonnets, that he had unwisely loved, and been betrayed in his love by a dear friend. Disgust of his profession as an actor and public and private ill weighed heavily on him, and in darkness of spirit, though still clinging to the business of the theatre, he passed from comedy to write of the sterner side of the world, to tell the tragedy of mankind.

78.—**His Third Period, 1601–1608**, begins with the last days of Queen Elizabeth. It opens, 1601, with *Julius Cæsar*, and we may have, scattered through the telling of the great Roman's fate, the expression of Shakspere's sorrow for the ruin of Essex. *Hamlet* followed, for the poet felt, like the Prince of Denmark, that "the time was out of joint." *Hamlet*, the dreamer, may well represent Shakspere as he stood aside from the crash that overwhelmed his friends, and thought on the changing world. The tragi-comedy of *Measure for Measure* was next written, and is tragic in thought throughout. *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Lear*, *Troilus and Cressida* (finished from an incomplete work of his youth), *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus*, *Timon* (only in part his own), were all written in these five years. The darker sins of men, the unpitying fate which slowly gathers round and falls on men, the avenging wrath of conscience, the cruelty and punishment of weakness, the treachery, lust, jealousy, ingratitude, madness of men, the follies of the great and the fickleness of the mob, are all, with a thousand other varying moods and passions, painted, and felt as his own while he painted them, during this stern time.

79. **His Fourth Period, 1608–1613.**—As Shakspere wrote of these things he passed out of them, and his last days are full of the gentle and loving calm of one who has known sin and sorrow and fate, but has risen above them into peaceful victory. Like his great contemporary Bacon, he left the world and his own evil time behind him, and with the same

quiet dignity sought the innocence and stillness of country life. The country breathes through all the dramas of this time. The flowers Perdita gathers in *Winter's Tale*, the frolic of the sheep-shearing, he may have seen in the Stratford meadows; the song of Fidele in *Cymbeline* is written by one who already feared no more the frown of the great, nor slander, nor censure rash, and was looking forward to the time when men should say of him—

> "Quiet consummation have;
> And renownèd be thy grave!"

Shakspere probably left London in 1609, and lived in the house he had bought at Stratford-on-Avon. He was reconciled, it is said, to his wife, and the plays now written dwell on domestic peace and forgiveness. The story of *Marina*, which he left unfinished, and which two later writers expanded into the play of *Pericles*, is the first of his closing series of dramas. The *Tempest*, *Cymbeline*, *Winter's Tale*, bring his history up to 1612, and in the next year he closed his poetic life by writing, with Fletcher, *Henry VIII.* The *Two Noble Kinsmen* of Fletcher, a great part of which is now, on doubtful grounds I think, attributed to Shakspere, and in which the poet sought the inspiration of Chaucer, would belong to this period. For three years he kept silence, and then, on the 23rd of April, 1616, it is supposed on his fifty-second birthday, he died.

80. **His Work.**—We can only guess with regard to Shakspere's life; we can only guess with regard to his character. It has been tried to find out what he was from his sonnets, and from his plays, but every attempt seems to be a failure. We cannot lay our hand on anything and say for certain that it was spoken by Shakspere out of his own character. The most personal thing in all his writings is one that has been scarcely noticed. It is the Epilogue to the

Tempest, and if it be, as is most probable, one of the last things he ever wrote, then its cry for forgiveness, its tale of inward sorrow only to be relieved by prayer, give us some dim insight into how the silence of those three years was passed; while its declaration of his aim in writing, "which was to please"—the true definition of the artist's aim, if the pleasure he desire to give be noble — should make us very cautious in our efforts to define his character from his works. Shakspere made men and women whose dramatic action on each other, and towards a catastrophe, was intended to please the public, not to reveal himself. Frequently failing in fineness of workmanship, having, but far less than the other dramatists, the faults of the art of his time, he was yet in all other points—in creative power, in impassioned conception and execution, in plenteousness, in the continuance of his romantic feeling—the greatest artist the modern world has known. No commentary on his writings, no guesses about his life or character, are worth much which do not rest on this canon as their foundation —What he did, thought, learned, and felt, he did, thought, learned, and felt as an artist. Like the rest of the great artists, he reflected the noble things of his time, but refused to reflect the base. Fully influenced, as we see in Hamlet he was, by the graver and more philosophic cast of thought of the latter time of Elizabeth; passing on into the reign of James I., when pedantry took the place of gaiety, and sensual the place of imaginative love in the drama, and artificial art the place of that art which itself is nature; he preserves to the last the natural passion, the simple tenderness, the sweetness, grace, and fire of the youthful Elizabethan poetry. The *Winter's Tale* is as lovely a love-story as *Romeo and Juliet*, the *Tempest* is more instinct with imagination and as great in fancy as the *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and yet there are fully twenty

years between them. The only change is in the increase of power and in a closer and graver grasp of human nature. In the unchangeableness of this joyful and creative art-power Shakspere is almost alone. Around him the whole tone and manner of the drama altered for the worse as his life went on, but his work grew to the close in strength and beauty.

81. **The Decay of the Drama** begins while Shakspere is alive. At first one can scarcely call it decay, it was so magnificent. For it began with "rare BEN JONSON." His first play, in its very title, *Every Man in his Humour*, 1596–98, enables us to say in what the first step of this decay consisted. The drama in Shakspere's hands had been the painting of the whole of human nature, the painting of characters as they were built up by their natural bent, and by the play of circumstance upon them. The drama, in Ben Jonson's hands, was the painting of that particular human nature which he saw in his own age; and his characters are not men and women as they are, but as they may become when they are mastered by a special bias of the mind or *Humour*. "The Manners, now called Humours, feed the Stage," says Jonson himself. *Every Man in his Humour* was followed by *Every Man out of his Humour*, and by *Cynthia's Revels*, written to satirise the courtiers. The fierce satire of these plays brought the town down upon him, and he replied to their "noise" in the *Poetaster*, in which Dekker and Marston were satirised. Dekker answered with the *Satiro-Mastix*, a bitter parody on the *Poetaster*, in which he did not spare Jonson's bodily defects. The staring Leviathan, as he calls Jonson, is not a very untrue description. Silent then for two years, he reappeared with the tragedy of *Sejanus*, and then quickly produced three splendid comedies in James I.'s reign, *Volpone the Fox*, the *Silent Woman*, and the *Alchemist*, 1605–9–10. The first is the finest thing he ever did, as great in power as it is in the

interest and skill of its plot; the second is chiefly valuable as a picture of English life in high society; the third is full to weariness of Jonson's obscure learning, but its character of Sir Epicure Mammon redeems it. In 1611 his *Catiline* appeared, and eight years after he was made Poet Laureate. Soon he became poor and palsy-stricken, but his genius did not decay. The most graceful and tender thing he ever wrote was written in his old age. His pastoral drama the *Sad Shepherd* proves that, like Shakspere, Jonson grew kinder and gentler as he grew near to death, and death took him in 1637. He was a great man. The power and copiousness of the young Elizabethan age belonged to him; and he stands far below, but still worthily by, Shakspere, "a robust, surly, and observing dramatist."

82. **Masques.**—Rugged as Jonson was, he could turn to light and graceful work, and it is with his name that we connect the *Masques*. Masques were dramatic representations made for a festive occasion, with a reference to the persons present and the occasion. Their personages were allegorical. They admitted of dialogue, music, singing and dancing, combined by the use of some ingenious fable into a whole. They were made and performed for the court and the houses of the nobles, and the scenery was as gorgeous and varied as the scenery of the playhouse proper was poor and unchanging. Arriving for the first time at any repute in Henry VIII.'s time, they reached splendour under James and Charles I. Great men took part in them. When Ben Jonson wrote them, Inigo Jones made the scenery and Lawes the music; and Lord Bacon, Whitelock, and Selden sat in committee for the last great masque presented to Charles. Milton himself made them worthier by writing *Comus*, and their scenic decoration was soon introduced into the regular theatres.

83. **Beaumont and Fletcher** worked together,

but out of more than fifty plays, all written in James I.'s reign, not more than fourteen were shared in by Beaumont, who died at the age of thirty in 1616, Fletcher survived him, and died in 1625. Both were of gentle birth. Beaumont, where we can trace his work, is weighter and more dignified than his comrade, but Fletcher was the better poet. Their *Philaster* and *Thierry and Theodoret* are fine examples of their tragic power. Fletcher's *Faithful Shepherdess* is full of lovely poetry, and both are masters of grace and pathos and style. They enfeebled the blank verse of the drama while they rendered it sweeter by using feminine endings and adding an eleventh syllable with great frequency. This gave freedom and elasticity to their verse, and was suited to the dialogue of comedy, but it lowered the dignity of their tragedy. The two men mark a change in politics and society from Shakspere's time. Shakspere's loyalty is constitutional; Beaumont and Fletcher are blind supporters of James I.'s invention of the divine right of kings. Shakspere's society was on the whole decent, and it is so in his plays. Beaumont and Fletcher are "studiously indecent." In contrast to them Shakspere is as white as snow. Shakspere's men are of the type of Sidney and Raleigh, Burleigh and Drake. The men of these two writers represent the "young bloods" of the Stuart court; and even the best of their older and graver men are base and foul in thought. Their women are either monsters of badness or of goodness. When they paint a good woman (two or three at most being excepted), she is beyond nature. The fact is that the high art which in Shakspere sought to give a noble pleasure by being true to human nature in its natural aspects, sank now into the baser art which wished to excite, at any cost, the passions of the audience by representing human nature in unnatural aspects.

84. In **Massinger and Ford** this evil is just as

plainly marked. Massinger's first dated play was the *Virgin Martyr*, 1620. He lived poor, and died "a stranger," in 1639. In these twenty years he wrote thirty-seven plays, of which the *New Way to Pay Old Debts* is the best known by its character of Sir Giles Overreach. No writer is fouler in language, and there is a want of unity of impression both in his plots and in his characters. He often sacrifices art to effect, and, "unlike Shakspere, seems to despise his own characters." On the other hand, his versification and language are flexible and strong, "and seem to rise out of the passions he describes." He speaks the tongue of real life. His men and women are far more natural than those of Beaumont and Fletcher, and, with all his coarseness, he is the most moral of the secondary dramatists. Nowhere is his work so great as when he represents the brave man struggling through trial to victory, the pure woman suffering for the sake of truth and love; or when he describes the terrors that conscience brings on injustice and cruelty. JOHN FORD, his contemporary, published his first play, the *Lover's Melancholy*, in 1629, and five years after, *Perkin Warbeck*, the best historical drama after Shakspere. Between these dates appeared others, of which the best is the *Broken Heart*. He carried to an extreme the tendency of the drama to unnatural and horrible subjects, but he did so with very great power. He has no comic humour, but no man has described better the worn and tortured human heart.

85. **Webster and other Dramatists.**—Higher as a poet, and possessing the same power as Ford, though not the same exquisite tenderness, was JOHN WEBSTER, whose best drama, *The Duchess of Malfi*, was acted in 1616. *Vittoria Corombona* was printed in 1612, and was followed by the *Devil's Law Case*, *Appius and Virginia*, and others. Webster's peculiar power of creating ghastly horror is redeemed

from sensationalism by his poetic insight. His imagination easily saw, and expressed in short and intense lines, the inmost thoughts and feelings of characters whom he represents as wrought on by misery, or crime, or remorse, at their very highest point of passion. In his worst characters there is some redeeming touch, and this poetic pity brings him nearer to Shakspere than the rest. He is also neither so coarse, nor so great a king worshipper, nor so irreligious as the others. We seem to taste the Puritan in his work. Two comedies, *Westward Ho!* and *Northward Ho!* remarkable for the light they throw on the manners of the time, were writen by him along with THOMAS DEKKER. GEORGE CHAPMAN is the only one of the later Elizabethan dramatists who kept the old fire of Marlowe, though he never had the naturalness or temperance which lifted Shakspere far beyond Marlowe. The same force which we have seen in his translation of Homer is to be found in his plays. The mingling of intellectual power with imagination, violence of words and images with tender and natural and often splendid passages, is entirely in the earlier Elizabethan manner. Like Marlowe, nay, even more than Marlowe, he is always impassioned, and "hurled instinctive fire about the world." These were the greatest names among a crowd of dramatists. We can only mention John Marston, Henry Glapthorne, Richard Brome, William Rowley, Thomas Middleton, Cyril Tourneur, and Thomas Heywood. Of these, "all of whom," says Lamb, "spoke nearly the same language, and had a set of moral feelings and notions in common," JAMES SHIRLEY is the last. He lived till 1666. In him the fire and passion of the old time passes away, but some of the delicate poetry remains, and in him the Elizabethan drama dies. In 1642 the theatres were closed during the calamitous times of the Civil War. Strolling players managed to exist with difficulty, and against

the law, till 1656, when SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT had his opera of the *Siege of Rhodes* acted in London. It was the beginning of a new drama, in every point but impurity different from the old, and four years after, at the Restoration, it broke loose from the prison of Puritanism to indulge in a shameless license.

In this rapid sketch of the Drama in England we have been carried on beyond the death of Elizabeth to the date of the Restoration. It was necessary, because it keeps the whole story together. We now return to the time that followed the accession of James I.

CHAPTER V.

FROM ELIZABETH'S DEATH TO THE RESTORATION.

1603—1660.

Lord Bacon, *Advancement of Learning* (two books), **1605**; expanded into nine Latin books, **1623**; *Novum Organon* (first sketch), **1607**; finished, **1620**: *Historia Naturalis et Experimentalis*, **1622**. These three form the *Instauratio Magna*; last edition of *Essays*, **1625**; dies, **1626**.—Giles Fletcher's *Temptation of Christ*, **1610**.—W. Browne's *Britannia's Pastorals*, **1613, 16**.—J. Donne's *Poems and Satires*, **1613-1635**.—G. Wither, *Poems*, **1613-1622-1641**.—George Herbert, *Temple*, **1631**.—Jeremy Taylor, *Liberty of Prophesying*, **1647**.—R. Herrick, *Hesperides*, **1648**—Hobbes' *Leviathan*, **1651**.—T. Fuller's *Church History*, **1656**.—J. Milton, born **1608**; *First Poem*, **1626**; *L'Allegro*, **1632**; *Comus* and *Lycidas*, **1634-1637**; Prose writings and most of the Sonnets, **1640-1660**; *Paradise Lost*, **1667**; *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, **1671**: dies **1674**. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, **1678-1684**.

86. **The Literature of this Period** may fairly be called Elizabethan, but not so altogether. The Prose retained the manner of the Elizabethan time and

the faults of its style, but gradually grew into greater excellence, spread itself over larger fields of thought and took up a greater variety of subjects. The Poetry, on the contrary, decayed. It exaggerated the vices of the Elizabethan art, and lost its virtues. But this is not the whole account of the matter. We must add that a new Prose, of greater force of thought and of a simpler style than the Elizabethan, arose in the writings of a theologian like Chillingworth and a philosopher like Hobbes: and that a new type of poetry, distinct from that "metaphysical" poetry of fantastic wit into which Elizabethan poetry had degenerated, was written by some of the lyrical writers of the court. It was Elizabethan in its lyric note, but it was not obscure. It had grace, simplicity, and smoothness. In its greater art and clearness it tells us that the critical school is at hand.

87. **Prose Literature.—Philosophy** passed from Elizabeth into the reign of James I. with Francis Bacon. The splendour of the form and of the English prose of the *Advancement of Learning*, two books of which were published in 1605, raises it into the realm of pure literature. It was expanded into nine Latin books in 1623, and with the *Novum Organon*, finished in 1620, and the *Historia Naturalis et Experimentalis*, 1622, formed the *Instauratio Magna*. The impulse these books gave to research, and to the true method of research, though only partly right, awoke scientific inquiry in England; and before the Royal Society was constituted in the reign of Charles II., our science, though far behind that of the Continent, had done some good work. William Harvey lectured on the Circulation of the Blood in 1615, and during the Civil War and the Commonwealth men like Robert Boyle, the chemist, and John Wallis, the mathematician, and others met in William Petty's rooms at Brazenose, and prepared the way for Newton.

88. **History**, except in the publication of the earlier

Chronicles of Archbishop Parker, does not appear in the later part of Elizabeth's reign, but under James I. Camden, Spelman, Selden, and Speed continued the antiquarian researches of Stow and Grafton. Bacon published a *History of Henry VII.* and Daniel the poet, in his *History of England to the Time of Edward III.*, 1613-18, was one of the first to throw history into such a literary form as to make it popular. KNOLLES' *History of the Turks*, 1603; and SIR WALTER RALEIGH'S vast sketch of the *History of the World* show how for the first time history spread itself beyond English interests. Raleigh's book, written in the peaceful evening of a stormy life, and in the quiet of his prison, is not only literary from the ease and vigour of its style, but from its still spirit of melancholy thought.

In 1614, John Selden's *Titles of Honour* added to the accurate work he had done in Latin on the English Records, and his *History of Titles* was written with the same careful regard for truth in 1618. Thomas May, the dramatist, wrote the *History of the Parliament of England, which began* 1640, for the Parliament in 1647, a history with a purpose; but the only book of literary note is Thomas Fuller's *Church History of Britain*, 1656. The antiquarian research that makes materials for history was carried on by Ashmole, Dugdale, and Rushworth.

89. **Miscellaneous Literature.**—The pleasure of *travel*, still lingering among us from Elizabeth's reign, found a quaint voice in Thomas Coryat's *Crudities*, which, in 1611, describes his journey through France and Italy, and in George Sandy's book, 1615, which tells his journey in the East; while Henry Wotton's *Letters from Italy* are pleasant reading. The care with which Samuel Purchas, in 1613, enlarged Hakluyt's *Voyages*, brings us back to the time when adventure was delight in England, and he continued the same work, 1625, under the title of *Purchas*,

his Pilgrimes. The painting of short *Characters* was begun by Sir Thomas Overbury's book in 1614, and carried on by John Earle and Joseph Hall, who became bishops. This kind of literature marks the interest in individual life which now began to arise, and which soon took form in *Biography.* THOMAS FULLER'S *Holy and Profane State,* 1642, added to sketches of "characters," illustrations of them in the lives of famous persons, and in 1662 his *Worthies of England,* still further advanced the literature of biography. He is a quaint and delightful writer; good sense, piety, and inventive wit are woven together in his work. We may place together Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy,* 1621, and Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici,* 1642, and *Pseudodoxia* as books which treat of miscellaneous subjects in a witty and learned fashion, but without any true scholarship. This kind of writing was greatly increased by the *setting up of libraries,* where men dipped into every kind of literature. It was in James I.'s reign that Sir Thomas Bodley established the Bodleian at Oxford, and Sir Robert Cotton a library now placed in the British Museum. A number of writers took part in the Puritan and Church controversies; but none of them deserve, save Milton, and Prynne, and James Usher, the name of literary men. Usher's work was, as an Irish Archbishop, chiefly taken up by the Roman Catholic controversy. William Prynne's fierce invective against the drama in the *Histriomastix,* or *Scourge of Players,* earned for him one of the most cruel sentences of the Star Chamber. But he outlived imprisonment by both parties, and his *Perfect Narrative* is a graphic account of his efforts to gain admission to the House in Charles II.'s reign. Charles made him Keeper of the Records, and he spent the rest of his varied life in antiquarian researches. In pleasant contrast to these controversies appears the gentle literature of Izaak Walton's *Compleat Angler,*

1653, a book which resembles in its quaint and garrulous style the rustic scenery and prattling rivers that it celebrates, and marks the quiet interest in country life which now began to grow in England.

Theology.—But there were others who rose above the war of party on both sides into the calm air of spiritual religion. The English of Lancelot Andrewe's pious learning was excelled by the poetic prose of JEREMY TAYLOR, who, at the close of Charles I.'s reign, published his *Great Exemplar* and the *Holy Living* and *Dying*, and shortly afterwards his *Sermons*. They had been preceded in 1647 by his *Liberty of Prophesying*, in which, agreeing with John Hales and William Chillingworth, who wrote during the reign of Charles I., he pleaded the cause of religious liberty and toleration, and of rightness of life as more important than a correct theology, and did the same kind of work for freedom of Biblical interpretation as Milton strove to do in his *System of Christian Doctrine*. Taylor's work is especially literary. Weighty with argument, his books are even more read for their sweet and deep devotion, for their rapid, impassioned and convoluted eloquence. On the other side, the fine sermons of Richard Sibbes converted Richard Baxter, whose manifold literary work only ended in the reign of James II. One little thing of his, written at the close of the Civil War, became a household book in England. There used to be few cottages which did not possess a copy of the *Saints' Everlasting Rest*. A vast number of sects arose during the Commonwealth, but the only one which gave birth to future literature was started by George Fox, the first Quaker.

The style of nearly all these writers links them to the age of Elizabeth. It did not follow the weighty gravity of Hooker, or the balanced calm and splendour of Bacon, but rather the witty quaintness of Lyly and of Sidney. The prose of men like Browne and

Burton and Fuller is not as poetic as that of these Elizabethan writers, but it is just as fanciful. Even the prose of Jeremy Taylor is over-poetical, and though it has all the Elizabethan ardour, it has also the Elizabethan faults of excessive wordiness and fantastic wit. It never knows where to stop. Milton's prose works, which shall be mentioned in their place in his life, are also Elizabethan in style. They have the fire and violence, the eloquence and diffuseness, of the earlier literature, but in spite of the praise their style has received, it can in reality be scarcely called a style. It has all the faults a prose style can have except obscurity and vulgarity. Its magnificent bursts of eloquence ought to be in poetry, and it never charms except when Milton becomes purposely simple in personal narrative. There is no pure style in prose writing till Hobbes began to write in English—indeed we may say till after the Restoration, unless we except, on grounds of weight and power, the styles of Bacon and Hooker.

90. **The Decline of Poetry.** — The various elements which we have noticed in the poetry of Elizabeth's reign, without the exception even of the slight Catholic element, though opposed to each other, were filled with one spirit—the love of England and the Queen. Nor were they ever sharply divided; they are found interwoven, and modifying one another in the same poet, as for instance Puritanism and Chivalry in Spenser, Catholicism and Love in Constable; and all are mixed together in Shakspere and the dramatists. This unity of spirit in poetry became less and less after the queen's death. The elements remained, but they were separated. The cause of this was that the strife in politics between the Divine Right of Kings and Liberty, and in religion between the Church and the Puritans, grew so defined and intense that England ceased to be at one, and the poets represented the parties, not the whole, of Eng-

land. But they all shared in a certain style which induced Johnson to call them *metaphysical.* "They were those," Hallam says, "who laboured after conceits, or novel turns of thought, usually false, and resting on some equivocation of language or exceedingly remote analogy." This style, originating in the *Euphues* and *Arcadia*, was driven out by the passion which filled poetry in the middle period of Elizabeth's reign, but was taken up again towards its close, and grew after her death until it ended by greatly lessening good sense and clearness in English poetry. It was in the reaction from it, and in the determination to bring clear thought and clear expression of thought into English verse, that the school of Dryden and Pope—the critical school—began. The poetry from the later years of Elizabeth to Milton illustrates all these remarks.

91. **The Lyric Poetry** struck a new note in the songs of Ben Jonson, such as the *Hymn to Diana.* They are less natural, less able to be sung than Shakspere's, more classical, more artificial. Drayton's *Agincour* is one of the many lyrics still written on the glories of England, and Wither in some of his songs still recalls the Elizabethan charm. In Charles I.'s reign the lyrics of dramatists like Ford, Shirley, Webster, and others, retain the same charm. But none of them have any special tendency. A new character, royalist and of the court, now appears in the lyrics of THOMAS CAREW, EDMUND WALLER, ABRAHAM COWLEY, SIR JOHN SUCKLING, COLONEL LOVELACE, and ROBERT HERRICK whose *Hesperides* was published in 1648. They are, for the most part, light, pleasant, short songs and epigrams on the passing interests of the day, on the charms of the court beauties, on a lock of hair, a dress, on all the fleeting forms of fleeting love. Here and there we find a pure or pathetic song, and there are few of them which time has selected that do not possess a gay or a gentle

grace. As the Civil War deepened, the special court poetry died, and the songs became songs of battle and marching, and devoted and violent loyalty. These have been lately collected under the title of *Songs of the Cavaliers*. Midst of them all, like voices from another world, purer, more musical, and filled with the spirit of fine art, were heard the lyrical strains of Milton.

92. **Satirical Poetry**, always arising when natural passion in poetry decays, is represented in the later days of Elizabeth by MARSTON the dramatist's coarse but vigorous satires, and JOSEPH HALL, afterwards Bishop Hall, whose *Virgidemiarum*, 1597, satires partly in poetry, make him the master satirist of this time. JOHN DONNE, Dean of St. Paul's, who also partly belongs to the age of Elizabeth, was, with John Cleveland (a furious royalist and satirist of Charles I.'s time), the most obscure and fanciful of these poets. Donne, however, rose above the rest in the beauty of thought and in the tenderness of his religious and love poems. His satires are graphic pictures of the manners of the age of James I. GEORGE WITHER hit the follies and vices of the days so hard in his *Abuses Stript and Whipt*, 1613, that he was put into the Marshalsea prison and there continued his satires in the *Shepherd's Hunting*. As the Puritan and the Royalist became more opposed to one another, satirical poetry naturally became more bitter; but, like the lyrical poetry of the Civil War, it took the form of short songs and pieces which went about the country, as those of Bishop Corbet did, in manuscript.

93. **The Rural Poetry.** — The *pastoral* now began to take a more truly rural form than the conventional pastorals of France and Italy, out of which it rose. In WILLIAM BROWNE'S *Britannia's Pastorals*, 1613 (second part, 1616), followed by the seven eclogues of the *Shepherd's Pipe*, the element of

pleasure in country life arises, and from this time it begins to grow in our poetry. It appears slightly in Wither's *Shepherd's Hunting*, but plainly in his *Mistress of Philarete*, while DENHAM'S *Cooper's Hill*, 1643, introduces the poetry which makes natural landscape the ground of philosophic meditation. This element of enjoyment of nature, seen already in Walton's *Compleat Angler*, is most strong in ANDREW MARVELL, Milton's friend. In imaginative intensity, in the fusing together of personal feeling and thought with the delight received from nature, his verses on the *Emigrants in the Bermudas* and the *Thoughts in a Garden*, and the little poem, *The Girl Describes her Fawn*, are like the work of Wordsworth on one side, and like good Elizabethan work on the other. They are, with Milton's songs, the last and the truest echo of the lyrics of the time of Elizabeth, but they reach beyond them in the love of nature.

94. **Spenserians.**—Among these broken-up forms of poetry, there was one kind which was imitative of Spenser. PHINEAS FLETCHER, GILES FLETCHER, HENRY MORE in his *Platonical Song of the Soul*, 1642, and JOHN CHALKHILL in his *Thealma*, owned him as their master. The *Purple Island*, 1633, of the first, an elaborate allegory of the body and mind of man, has some grace and sweetness, and tells us that the scientific element, which, after the Restoration took form in the setting up of the Royal Society, was so far spread in England at his time as to influence the poets.

95. **Religious Poetry.** — The *Temptation and Victory of Christ*, 1610, of Giles Fletcher, is a delicately-wrought poem, and gave hints to Milton for the *Paradise Regained*. It was a finished piece, but the religious poetry chiefly took form in collections of short poems. Among these we mention William Drummond's *Flowers of Sion* in which Platonism lingered, and Donne's religious poems in which he showed his

ingenuity more than his devotion. Of them all, however, the *Temple*, 1631, of GEORGE HERBERT, rector of Bemerton, has been the most popular. The purity and profound devotion of its poems have made it dear to all. Its gentle Church feeling has pleased all classes of Churchmen; its great quaintness, which removes it from true poetry, has added perhaps to its charm. With him we must rank HENRY VAUGHAN, the Silurist, whose *Sacred Poems* (1651), are equally devotional, pure, and quaint; and FRANCIS QUARLES, whose *Divine Emblems*, 1635, is still read in the cottages of England. On the Roman Catholic side, WILLIAM HABINGTON mingled his devotion to his religion with the praises of his wife under the name of *Castara*, 1634; and RICHARD CRASHAW, whose rich inventiveness was not made less rich by the religious mysticism which finally led him to become a Roman Catholic, published his *Steps to the Temple* in 1646. On the Puritan side, we may now place George Wither, whose *Hallelujah*, 1641, a series of religious poems, was sent forth just before the Civil War began, when he left the king's side to support the Parliament. Even Herrick, in 1648, expressed the pious part of his nature in his *Noble Numbers*. Finally, religious poetry, after the return of Charles II., passed on through the *Davideis* of ABRAHAM COWLEY, and the *Divine Love* of EDMUND WALLER, to find its highest expression in the *Paradise Lost*. We have thus traced through all its forms the decline of poetry. From this decay we pass into a new created world when we come to speak of Milton. Between the dying poetry of the past and the uprising of a new kind of poetry in Dryden, stands alone the majestic work of a great genius who touches the Elizabethan time with one hand and our own time with the other.

96. **John Milton** was the last of the Elizabethans, and, except Shakspere, far the greatest of them all. Born in 1608, in Bread-street (close by the Mermaid

Tavern), he may have seen Shakspere, for he remained till he was sixteen in London. His literary life may be said to begin with his entrance into Cambridge, in 1625, the year of the accession of Charles I. Nicknamed the "Lady of Christ's" from his beauty and delicate taste and morality, he soon attained a great fame, and during the seven years of his life at the university his poetic genius opened itself in the English poems of which I give the dates. *On the Death of a Fair Infant*, 1626. *At a Vacation Exercise*, 1628. *On the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, 1629. *On the Circumcision*, *On Time*, *At a Solemn Musick*, *The Passion*, *Epitaph on Shakspere*, 1630. *On the University Carrier*, *Epitaph on Marchioness of Worcester*, 1631; *Sonnet i.*, *On Attaining the Age of Twenty-three*; *Sonnet ii.*, *To the Nightingale.* The first sonnet, explained by a letter that accompanied it, shows that Milton had given up his intention of becoming a clergyman. He left the university in 1632, and went to live at Horton, near Windsor, where he spent five years, steadily reading the Greek and Latin writers, and amusing himself with mathematics and music. Poetry was not neglected. The *Allegro* and *Penseroso* were written in 1633, and probably the *Arcades*; *Comus* was acted in 1634, and *Lycidas* composed in 1637. They prove that though Milton was Puritan in heart his Puritanism was of that earlier type which neither disdained the arts nor letters. But they represent a growing revolt from the Court and the Church. The *Penseroso* prefers the contemplative life to the mirthful, and *Comus*, though a masque, rose into a poem to the glory of temperance, and under its allegory attacked the Court. Three years later, *Lycidas* interrupts its exquisite stream of poetry with a fierce and resolute onset on the greedy shepherds of the Church. Milton had taken his Presbyterian bent.

In 1638 he went to Italy, the second home of so

many of the English poets, and visited Florence, where he saw Galileo, and Rome. At Naples he heard the sad news of civil war, which determined him to return; "inasmuch as I thought it base to be travelling at my ease for amusement, while my fellow-countrymen at home were fighting for liberty." But hearing that the war had not yet arisen, he remained in Italy till the end of 1639, and at the meeting of the Long Parliament we find him in a house in Aldersgate, where he lived till 1645. He had projected while abroad a great epic poem on the subject of Arthur (again the Welsh subject returns), but in London his mind changed, and among a number of subjects, tended at last to *Paradise Lost*, which he meant to throw into the form of a Greek Tragedy with lyrics and choruses.

97. **Milton's Prose—The Commonwealth.**—Suddenly his whole life changed, and for twenty years—1640–1660—he was carried out of art into politics, out of poetry into prose. Most of the *Sonnets*, however, belong to this time. Stately, rugged, or graceful, as he pleased to make them, some like Hebrew psalms, others having the classic ease of Horace, some even tender as Milton could gravely be, they are true, unlike those of Shakspere and Spenser, to the correct form of this difficult kind of poetry. But they were all he could now do of his true work. Before the Civil War began in 1642, he had written five vigorous pamphlets against Episcopacy. Six more pamphlets appeared in the next two years. One of these was the *Areopagitica; or, Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing*, 1644, a bold and eloquent attack on the censorship of the press by the Presbyterians. Another was a tract on *Education*. The four pamphlets in which he advocated conditional divorce made him still more the horror of the Presbyterians. In 1646 he published his poems, and in that year the sonnet *On the Forcers of Conscience*

shows that he had wholly ceased to be Presbyterian. His political pamphlets begin when his *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* defended in 1649 the execution of the king. The *Eikonoclastes* answered the *Eikon Basilike* (a portraiture of the sufferings of the king by Dr. Gauden), and his famous Latin *Defence for the People of England*, 1651, replied to Salmasius' *Defence of Charles I.*, and inflicted so pitiless a lashing on the great Leyden scholar, that his fame went over the whole of Europe. In the next year he wholly lost his sight. But he continued his work (being Latin secretary since 1649) when Cromwell was made Protector, and wrote another *Defence for the English People*, 1654, and a further *Defence of himself* against scurrilous charges. This closed the controversy in 1655. In the last year of the Protector's life he began the *Paradise Lost*, but the death of Cromwell threw him back into politics, and three more pamphlets on the questions of a Free Church and a Free Commonwealth were useless to prevent the Restoration. It was a wonder he was not put to death in 1660, and he was in hiding and in custody for a time. At last he settled in a house near Bunhill Fields. It was here that *Paradise Lost* was finished, before the end of 1665, and then published in 1667.

98. **Paradise Lost.**—We may regret that Milton was shut away from his art during twenty years of controversy. But it may be that the poems he wrote, when the great cause he fought for had closed in seeming defeat but real victory, gained from its solemn issues and from the moral grandeur with which he wrought for its ends their majestic movement, their grand style, and their grave beauty. During the struggle he had never forgotten his art. "I may one day hope," he said, speaking of his youthful studies, "to have ye again, in a still time, when there shall be no chiding. Not in these Noises," and the saying strikes the note of calm sublimity which is kept in *Paradise Lost*. It

opens with the awaking of the rebel angels in Hell after their fall from Heaven, the consultation of their chiefs how best to carry on the war with God, and the resolve of Satan to go forth and tempt newly created man to fall. He takes his flight to the earth and finds Eden. Eden is then described, and Adam and Eve in their innocence. The next four books, from the fifth to the eighth, contain the Archangel Raphael's story of the war in Heaven, the fall of Satan, and the creation of the world. The last four books describe the temptation and the fall of Man, the vision shown by Michael to Adam of the future world, and of the redemption of Man by Christ, and finally the expulsion from Paradise.

As we read the great epic, we feel that the lightness of heart of the *Allegro*, that even the classic philosophy of the *Comus*, are gone. The beauty of the poem is like that of a stately temple, which, vast in conception, is involved in detail. The style is the greatest in the whole range of English poetry. Milton's intellectual force supports and condenses his imaginative force, and his art is almost too conscious of itself. Sublimity is its essential difference. The interest of the story collects at first round the character of Satan, but he grows meaner as the poem goes on, and his second degradation after he has destroyed innocence is one of the finest and most consistent motives in the poem. The tenderness of Milton, his love of beauty, the passionate fitness of his words to his work, his religious depth, fill the scenes in which he paints Paradise, our parents and their fall, and at last all thought and emotion centre round Adam and Eve, until the closing lines leave us with their lonely image on our minds. In every part of the poem, in every character in it, as indeed in all his poems, Milton's intense individuality appears. It is a pleasure to find it. The egotism of such a man, said Coleridge, is a revelation of spirit.

99. **Milton's Later Poems.**—*Paradise Lost* was followed by *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, published together in 1671. *Paradise Regained* opens with the journey of Christ into the wilderness after His baptism, and its four books describe the temptation of Christ by Satan, and the answers and victory of the Redeemer. The speeches in it drown the action, and their learned argument is only relieved by a few descriptions; but these, as in that of Athens, are done with Milton's highest power. The same solemn beauty of a quiet mind and a more severe style than that of *Paradise Lost* make us feel in it that Milton has grown older.

In *Samson Agonistes* the style is still severer, even to the verge of a harshness which the sublimity alone tends to modify. It is a choral drama, after the Greek model. Samson in his blindness is described, is called on to make sport for the Philistines, and overthrows them in the end. Samson represents the fallen Puritan cause, and Samson's victorious death Milton's hopes for the final triumph of that cause. The poem has all the grandeur of the last words of a great man in whom there was now "calm of mind, all passion spent." It is also the last word of the music of the Elizabethan drama long after its notes seemed hushed, and the sound is strange in the midst of the new world of the Restoration. Soon afterwards, November, 1674, blind and old and fallen on evil days, Milton died; but neither blindness, old age, nor evil days could lessen the inward light, nor impair the imaginative power with which he sang, it seemed with the angels, the "undisturbed song of pure concent," until he joined himself, at last, with those "just spirits who wear victorious palms."

100. **His Work.**—To the greatness of the artist Milton joined the majesty of a pure and lofty character. His poetic style was as stately as his character, and proceeded from it. Living at a time when criti-

cism began to purify the verse of England, and being himself well acquainted with the great classical models, his work is seldom weakened by the false conceits and the intemperance of the Elizabethan writers, and yet is as imaginative as theirs, and as various. He has not their naturalness, nor all their intensity, but he has a larger grace, a more finished art, and a sublime dignity they did not possess. All the kinds of poetry which he touched he touched with the ease of great strength, and with so much weight, that they became new in his hands. He put a new life into the masque, the sonnet, the elegy, the descriptive lyric, the song, the choral drama; and he created the epic in England. The lighter love poem he never wrote, and we are grateful that he kept his coarse satirical power apart from his poetry. In some points he was untrue to his descent from the Elizabethans, for he had no dramatic faculty, and he had no humour. He summed up in himself the learned influences of the English Renaissance, and handed them on to us. His taste was as severe, his verse as polished, his method and language as strict as those of the school of Dryden and Pope that grew up when he was old. A literary past and present thus met in him, nor did he fail, like all the greatest men, to make a cast into the future. He began the poetry of pure natural description. Lastly, he did not represent in any way the England that followed the tyranny, the coarseness, the sensuality, the falseness, or the irreligion of the Stuarts, but he did represent Puritan England, and the whole career of Puritanism from its cradle to its grave.

101. **The Pilgrim's Progress.**—We might say that Puritanism said its last great words with Milton, were it not that its spirit continued in English life, were it not also that four years after his death, in 1678, JOHN BUNYAN, who had previously written religious poems, and in 1665 the *Holy City*, published the *Pilgrim's Progress*. It is the journey of Christian

the Pilgrim, from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City. The *second part* was published in 1684, and in 1682 the allegory of the *Holy War*. I class the *Pilgrim's Progress* here, because in its imaginative fervour and poetry, and in its quality of naturalness, it belongs to the spirit of the Elizabethan times. Written by a man of the people, it is a people's book; and its simple form grew out of passionate feeling, and not out of self-conscious art. The passionate feeling was religious, and in painting the pilgrim's progress towards Heaven, and his battle with the world and temptation, and sorrow, the book touched those deep and poetical interests which belong to poor and rich. Its language, the language of the Bible, and its allegorical form, set on foot a plentiful literature of the same kind. But none have equalled it. Its form is almost epic: its dramatic dialogue, its clear types of character, its vivid descriptions, as of Vanity Fair, and of places such as the Dark Valley and the Delectable Mountains which represent states of the human soul, have given an equal but a different pleasure to children and men, to the ignorant villager and to Lord Macaulay.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE DEATH OF POPE AND SWIFT.

1660—1745.

Butler's *Hudibras*, **1663**.—J. Dryden, born **1631**; his *Dramas* begin **1663**; *Absalom and Ahitophel*, **1681**; *Hind and Panther*, **1687**; *Fables* and death, **1700**.—Wycherley, Congreve, Farquhar, and Vanbrugh, *Dramas*, from **1672-1726**.—Newton's *Principia*, **1687**.—Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*, **1690**.—Alexander Pope, born **1688**; *Pastorals*, **1709**; *Rape of the Lock*, **1712**; *Homer* finished, **1725**: *Essay on Man*, **1732-1734**; *Dunciad* finished, **1741**; dies, **1744**.—Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, **1704**; *Gulliver's Travels*, **1726**.—Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, **1719**. Steele and Addison, *Spectator*, **1711**.—Addison's *Cato*, **1713**; Butler's *Analogy*, **1736**.

102. **Poetry. Change of Style.**—We have seen the natural style as distinguished from the artificial in the Elizabethan poets. Style became not only natural but artistic when it was used by a great genius like Shakspere or Spenser, for a first-rate poet creates rules of art; his work itself is often art. But when the art of poetry is making, its rules are not laid down, and the second-rate poets, inspired only by their feelings, will write in a natural style unrestrained by rules, that is, they will put their feelings into verse without caring much for the form in which they do it. As long as they live in the midst of a youthful national life, and feel an ardent sympathy with it, their style will be fresh and impassioned, and give pleasure because of the strong feeling that inspires it. But it will also be extravagant and unrestrained in its use of

images and words because of its want of art. This is the history of the style of the poets of the middle period of Elizabeth's reign. (2) Afterwards the national life grew chill, and the feelings of the poets also chill. Then the want of art in the style made itself felt. The far-fetched images, the hazarded meanings, the over-fanciful way of putting thoughts, the sensational expression of feeling, in which the Elizabethan poets indulged, not only appeared in all their ugliness when they were inspired by no warm feeling, but were indulged in far more than before. Men tried to produce by extravagant use of words the same results that ardent feeling had produced, and the more they failed the more extravagant and fantastic they became, till at last their poetry ceased to have clear meaning. This is the history of the style of the poets from the later days of Elizabeth till the Civil War. (3) The natural style, unregulated by art, had thus become unnatural. When it had reached that point, men began to feel how necessary it was that the style of poetry should be subjected to the rules of art, and two influences partly caused and partly supported this desire. One was the influence of Milton. Milton, first by his superb genius, which as I said creates of itself an artistic style, and secondly by his knowledge and imitation of the great classical models, was able to give the first example in England of a pure, grand, and finished style, and in blank verse and the sonnet, wrote for the first time with absolute correctness. Another influence was that of the movement all over Europe towards inquiry into the right way of doing things, and into the truth of things, a movement we shall soon see at work in science, politics, and religion. In poetry it produced a school of criticism which first took form in France, and the influence of Boileau, La Fontaine, and others who were striving after greater finish and neatness of expression, told on Eng-

land now. It is an influence which has been exaggerated. It is absurd to place the "creaking lyre" of Boileau side by side with Dryden's "long resounding march and energy divine" of verse. Our critical school of poets have no French qualities in them even when they imitate the French. (4) Further, our own poets had already, before the Restoration, begun the critical work, and the French influence served only to give it a greater impulse. We shall see the growth of a colder and more correct spirit of art in Cowley, Denham, and Waller. Vigorous form was given to that spirit by Dryden, and perfection of artifice added to it by Pope. The *artificial* style succeeded to and extinguished the *natural*.

103. **Change of Poetic Subject.**—The subject of the Elizabethan poets was Man as influenced by the Passions, and it was treated from the side of natural feeling. This was fully and splendidly done by Shakspere. But after a time this subject followed, as we have seen in speaking of the drama, the same career as the style. It was treated in an extravagant and sensational manner, and the representation of the passions tended to become, and did become unnatural or fantastic. Milton alone redeemed the subject from this vicious excess. He wrote in a grave and natural manner of the passions of the human heart, and he made strong the religious passions of love of God, sorrow for sin, and others, in English poetry. But with him the subject of man as influenced by the passions died for a time. Dryden, Pope, and their followers, turned to another. They left the passions aside, and wrote of the things in which the intellect and the conscience, the social and political instincts in man were interested. In this way the satiric, didactic, philosophical, and party poetry of a new school arose.

104. **Transition Poets.**—There were a few poets, writing partly before and partly after the Restoration, who represent the passage from the fantastic

to the more correct style. ABRAHAM COWLEY was one of these. His love poems, *The Mistress*, 1647, are courtly, witty, and have some of the Elizabethan imagination. His later poems, owing probably to his life in France, were more exact in verse, and more cold in form. The same may be said of EDMUND WALLER, who "first made writing in rhyme easily an art." He also lived a long time in France, and died in 1687. Sir John Denham's *Cooper's Hill*, 1643, was a favourite with Dryden for the "majesty of its style," and its didactic reflectiveness, and the chill stream of its verse and thought link him closely to Pope. Nor ought I to omit, as an example of the heroic poem, William Chamberlayne's *Pharonnida*, 1659. Sir W. Davenant's *Gondibert*, 1651, also an heroic poem, is perhaps the most striking example of this transition. Worthless as poetry, it represents the new interest in political philosophy and in science that was arising, and preludes the intellectual poetry. Its preface discourses of rime and the rules of art, and represents the new critical influence which came over with the exiled court from France. The critical school had therefore begun even before Dryden's poems were written. The change was less sudden than it seemed.

Satiric poetry, soon to become a greater thing, was made during this transition time into a powerful weapon by two men, each on a different side. Andrew Marvell's *Satires*, after the Restoration, embody the Puritan's wrath with the vices of the court and king, and his shame for the disgrace of England among the nations. The *Hudibras* of SAMUEL BUTLER, in 1663, represents the fierce reaction which had set in against Puritanism. It is justly famed for wit, learning, good sense, and ingenious drollery, and, in accordance with the new criticism, it is absolutely without obscurity. It is often as terse as Pope's best work. But it is too long, its wit wearies us at last, and it undoes the force

of its attack on the Puritans by its exaggeration. Satire should have at least the semblance of truth: yet Butler calls the Puritans cowards. We turn now to the first of these poets in whom poetry is founded on intellect rather than on feeling, and whose best verse is devoted to argument and satire.

105. **John Dryden** was the first of the new, as Milton was the last of the elder, school of poetry. It was late in life that he gained fame. Born in 1631, he was a Cromwellite till the Restoration, when he began the changes which mark his life. His poem on the Death of the Protector was soon followed by the *Astræa Redux*, which celebrated the return of Justice to the realm in the person of Charles II. The *Annus Mirabilis* appeared in 1667, and in this his great power was first clearly shown. It is the power of clear reasoning expressing itself with powerful and ardent ease in a rapid succession of condensed thoughts in verse. Such a power fitted Dryden for satire, and his *Absalom and Ahitophel*, the second part of which was mostly written by Nahum Tate, is the foremost of English satires. He had been a playwriter till its appearance in 1681, and the rimed plays which he had written enabled him to perfect the versification which is so remarkable in it and the poems that followed. The satire itself, written in mockery of the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Bill, attacked Shaftesbury as Ahitophel, was kind to Monmouth as Absalom, and in its sketch of Buckingham as Zimri the poet avenged himself for the *Rehearsal*. It was the first fine example of that party poetry which became still more bitter and personal in the hands of Pope. It was followed by the *Medal*, a new attack on Shaftesbury, and the *Mac Flecknoe*, in which Shadwell, a rival poet, who had supported Shaftesbury's party, was made the witless successor of Richard Flecknoe, a poet of all kinds of poetry, and master of none. After these, Dryden embodied his theology in verse, and the

Religio Laici, 1682, defends, and states the argument for, the Church of England. It was perhaps poverty that drove him on the accession of James II. to change his religion, and the *Hind and Panther*, 1687, is as fine a model of clear reasoning in behalf of the milk-white hind of the Church of Rome as the *Religio Laici* was in behalf of the Church of England, which now becomes the spotted panther. It produced in reply one of the happiest burlesques in English poetry, *The Country Mouse and the City Mouse*, the work of Charles Montague (Lord Halifax), and Mat Prior. Deprived of his offices at the Revolution, Dryden turned again to the drama, but the failure of the last of his good plays in 1694, drove him again from the stage, and he gave himself up to his *Translation of Vergil* which he finished in 1696. As a narrative poet his Fables and Translations, produced late in life, in 1699, give him a high rank, though the fine harmony of their verse does not win us to forget their coarseness, nor their lack of that skill in arranging a story which comes from imaginative feeling. As a lyric poet his fame rests on the animated *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day*. His translation of *Vergil* has fire, but wants the dignity and tenderness of the original. From Milton's death, 1674, till his own in 1700, Dryden reigned undisputed, and round his throne in Will's Coffeehouse, where he sat as "Glorious John," we may place the names of the lesser poets, the Earls of Dorset, Roscommon, and Mulgrave, Sir Charles Sedley, and the Earl of Rochester. The lighter poetry of the court lived on in the two last. John Oldham won a short fame by his *Satires on the Jesuits*, 1679; and Bishop Ken, 1668, set on foot, in his *Morning and Evening Hymns*, a new type of religious poetry.

106. **Prose Literature of the Restoration and Revolution. Science.**—During the Civil War the religious and political struggle absorbed the

country, but yet, apart from the strife, a few men who cared for scientific matters met at one another's houses. Out of this little knot, after the Restoration, arose the Royal Society, embodied in 1662. Astronomy, experimental chemistry, medicine, mineralogy, zoology, botany, vegetable physiology were all founded as studies, and their literature begun in the age of the Restoration. One man's work was so great in science as to merit his name being mentioned among the literary men of England. In 1671 Isaac Newton laid his *Theory of Light* before the Royal Society; in the year before the Revolution his *Principia* established with its proof of the theory of gravitation the true system of the universe.

It was in political and religious knowledge, however, that the intellectual inquiry of the nation was most shown. When the thinking spirit succeeds the active and adventurous in a people, one of the first things they will think upon is the true method and grounds of government, both divine and human. Two sides will be taken: the side of authority and the side of reason in Religion; the side of authority and the side of individual liberty in Politics.

107. **The Theological Literature** of those who declared that reason was supreme as a test of truth, arose with some men who met at Lord Falkland's just before the Civil War, and especially with John Hales and William Chillingworth. The spirit which animated these men filled also Jeremy Taylor, and Milton continued their liberal movement beyond the Restoration. The same kind of work, though modified towards more sedateness of expression, and less rationalistic, was now done by Archbishop Tillotson, and Bishop Burnet. In 1678, Cudworth's *Intellectual System of the Universe* is perhaps the best book on the controversy which then took form against those who were called Atheists. A number of divines in the English Church took sides for Authority or Reason, or opposed the

growing Deism during the latter half of the seventeenth century. It was an age of preachers, and Isaac Barrow, Newton's predecessor in the chair of mathematics at Cambridge, could preach, with grave and copious eloquence, for three hours at a time. Theological prose was strengthened by the publication of the sermons of Edward Stillingfleet and William Sherlock, and Sherlock's adversary, Robert South, was as witty in rhetoric as he was fierce in controversy.

108. **Political Literature.**—The resistance to authority in the opposition to the theory of the Divine Right of Kings did not enter into literature till after it had been worked out practically in the Civil War. During the Commonwealth and after the Restoration it took the form of a discussion on the abstract question of the Science of Government, and was mingled with an inquiry into the origin of society and the ground of social life. Milton's papers on the Divorce Question and his little tractate on Education were bold attempts to solve social questions, and his political tracts after the death of Cromwell, though directed to the questions of Church and State which were burning then, have a bearing beyond their time. But THOMAS HOBBES, during the Commonwealth, was the first who dealt with the question from the side of abstract reason, and he is also the first of all our prose writers whose style may be said to be uniform and correct, and adapted carefully to the subjects on which he wrote. His treatise, the *Leviathan*, 1651, declared (1) that the origin of all power was in the people, and (2) the end of all power was for the common weal. It destroyed the theory of a Divine Right of Kings and Priests, but it created another kind of Divine Right when it said that the power lodged in rulers by the people could not be taken away by the people. Sir R. Filmer supported the side of Divine Right in his *Patriarcha*, published 1680. Henry Nevile, in his *Dialogue concerning Government*, and James Har-

rington in his romance, *The Commonwealth of Oceana*, published at the beginning of the Commonwealth, contended that all secure government was to be based on property, but Nevile supported a monarchy, and Harrington—with whom I may class Algernon Sidney, whose political treatise on government is as statesmanlike as it is finely written—a democracy, on this basis. I may here mention that it was during this period, in 1667, that the first effort was made after a Science of Political Economy by Sir William Petty in his *Treatise on Taxes*.

109. **John Locke**, after the Revolution, in 1689-1690, followed the two doctrines of Hobbes in his treatise on *Civil Government*, but with these important additions—(1) that the people have a right to take away the power given by them to the ruler, (2) that the ruler is responsible to the people for the trust reposed in him, and (3) that legislative assemblies are Supreme as the voice of the people. This was the political philosophy of the Revolution. Locke carried the same spirit of free inquiry into the realm of religion, and in his three *Letters on Toleration*, 1689-90-92, laid down the philosophical grounds for liberty of religious thought. He finished by entering the realm of metaphysical inquiry. In 1690 appeared his *Essay concerning the Human Understanding*, in which he investigated its limits, and traced all ideas, and therefore all knowledge, to experience. In his clear statement of the way in which the Understanding works, in the way in which he guarded it and Language against their errors in the inquiry after truth, he did as much for the true method of thinking as Bacon had done for the Science of nature.

110. The intellectual stir of the time produced, apart from the great movement of thought, a good deal of **Miscellaneous Literature**. The painting of short "*characters*" was carried on after the Restoration by Samuel Butler and W. Charleton. These

"characters" had no personality, but as party spirit deepened, names thinly disguised were given to characters drawn of living men, and Dryden and Pope in poetry and all the prose wits of the time of Queen Anne and George I. made personal and often violent sketches of their opponents a special element in literature. On the other hand, Izaak Walton's *Lives*, in 1670, are examples of kindly, pleasant, and careful *Biography*. Cowley's small volume, written shortly before his death in 1667, and Dryden, in the masterly criticisms on his art which he prefixed to some of his dramas, gave richness to *the Essay*. These two writers began—with Hobbes—the second period of English prose, in which the style is easy, unaffected, moulded to the subject, and the proper words are put in their proper places. It is as different from the style that came before it as the easy manners of a gentleman are from those of a learned man unaccustomed to society. In William III.'s time Sir W. Temple's pleasant *Essays* bring us in style and tone nearer to the great class of essayists of whom Addison was chief. Lady Rachel Russell's Letters begin the *Letter-writing Literature* of England. Pepys (1660-69) and Evelyn, whose Diary grows full after 1640, begin that class of gossiping *Memoirs* which have been of so much use in giving colour to history. *History* itself at this time is little better than memoirs, and such a name may be fairly given to Clarendon's *History of the Civil Wars* (begun in 1641) and to Bishop Burnet's *History of his Own Time*, and to his *History of the Reformation* (begun in 1679, completed in 1715). Finally *Classical Criticism*, in the discussion on the genuineness of the Letters of Phalaris, was created by Richard Bentley in 1697-99. Literature was therefore plentiful. It was also correct, but it was not inventive.

111. The Literature of Queen Anne and the first Georges.—With the closing years of William III. and the accession of Queen Anne (1702)

a literature arose which was partly new and partly a continuance of that of the Restoration. The conflict between those who took the oath to the new dynasty and the Nonjurors who refused, the hot blood that it produced, the war between Dissent and Church, and between the two parties which now took the names of Whig and Tory, produced a mass of political pamphlets, of which Daniel Defoe's and Swift's were the best; of songs and ballads, like *Lillibullero*, which were sung in every street; of squibs, reviews, and satirical poems and letters. Every one joined in it, and it rose to importance in the work of the greater men who mingled literary studies with their political excitement. In politics all the abstract discussions we have mentioned ceased to be abstract, and became personal and practical, and the spirit of inquiry applied itself more closely to the questions of everyday life. The whole of this stirring literary life was concentrated in London, where the agitation of society was hottest; and it is round this vivid city life that the Literature of Queen Anne and the two following reigns is best grouped.

112. It was, with a few exceptions, **a Party Literature.** The Whig and Tory leaders enlisted on their sides the best poets and prose-writers, who fiercely satirised and unduly praised them under names thinly disguised. Our "Augustan Age" was an age of unbridled slander. Personalities were sent to and fro like shots in battle. Those who could do this work well were well rewarded, but the rank and file of writers were left to starve. Literature was thus honoured not for itself, but for the sake of party. The result was that the abler men lowered it by making it a political tool, and the smaller men, the fry of Grub Street, degraded it by using it in the same way, only in a baser manner. Their flattery was as abject as their abuse was shameless, and both were stupid. They received and deserved the merciless

lashing which Pope was soon to give them in the *Dunciad.* Being a party literature, it naturally came to study and to look sharply into human character and into human life as seen in the great city. It debated subjects of literary and scientific inquiry and of philosophy with great ability, but without depth. It discussed all the varieties of social life, and painted town society more vividly than has been done before or since; and it was so wholly taken up with this, that country life and its interests, except in the writings of Addison, were scarcely touched by it at all. Criticism being so active, the *form* in which thought was expressed was now especially dwelt on, and the result was that the style of English prose became for the first time absolutely simple and clear, and English verse reached a neatness of expression and a closeness of thought which was as exquisite as it was artificial. At the same time, and for the same reasons, Nature, Passion, and Imagination decayed in poetry.

113. **Alexander Pope** absorbed and reflected all these elements. Born in 1688, he wrote tolerable verse at twelve years old; the *Pastorals* appeared in 1709, and two years afterwards he took full rank as the critical poet in the *Essay on Criticism* (1711). The next year saw the first cast of his *Rape of the Lock*, the most brilliant occasional poem in our language. This closed what we may call his first period. In 1713, when he published *Windsor Forest*, he became known to Swift and to Henry St. John, Lord Bolingbroke. When these, with Gay, Parnell, Prior, Arbuthnot, and others, formed the Scriblerus Club, Pope joined them, and soon rose into great fame by his Translation of the *Iliad* (1715-1720), and by the Translation of the *Odyssey* (1723-25), in which he was assisted by Fenton and Broome. Being now at ease, for he received more than 8,000*l.* for this work, he published from his retreat at Twickenham, and in

bitter scorn of the poetasters and of all the petty scribblers who annoyed him, the *Dunciad*, 1728. Its original hero was Lewis Theobald, but when the fourth book was published, under Warburton's influence, in 1742, Colley Cibber was enthroned as the King of Dunces instead of Theobald. The fiercest and finest of Pope's satires, it closes his second period which breathes the savageness of Swift. The third phase of Pope's literary life was closely linked to his friend Bolingbroke. It was in conversation with him that he originated the *Essay on Man* (1732-4) and the *Imitations of Horace*. The *Moral Essays*, or Epistles to men and women, were written to praise those whom he loved, and to satirise the bad poets and the social follies of the day, and all who disliked him or his party. In the last few years of his life, Bishop Warburton, the writer of the *Legation of Moses* and editor of Shakspere, helped him to fit the *Moral Essays* into the plan of which the *Essay on Man* formed part. Warburton was Pope's last great friend; but almost his only old friend. By 1740 nearly all the members of his literary circle were dead, and a new race of poets and writers had grown up. In 1744 he died. The masterly form into which he threw the philosophical principles he condensed into didactic poetry make them more impressive than they have a right to be. The *Essay on Man*, though its philosophy is poor and not his own, is crowded with lines that have passed into daily use. The *Essay on Criticism* is equally full of critical precepts put with exquisite skill. The *Satires* and *Epistles* are didactic, but their excellence is in the terse and finished types of character, in the almost creative drawing of which Pope remains unrivalled, even by Dryden. His translation of Homer is made with great literary art, but for that very reason it does not make us feel the simplicity and directness of Homer. It has neither the manner of Homer, nor the spirit of the Greek life, just as Pope's descriptions

of nature have neither the manner nor the spirit of nature. The *heroic couplet*, in which he wrote nearly all his work, he used with a correctness that has never been surpassed, but its smooth perfection, at length, wearies the ear. It wants the breaks that passion and imagination naturally make. Finally, he was a true artist, hating those who degraded his art, and at a time when men followed it for money, and place, and the applause of the club and of the town, he loved it faithfully to the end, for its own sake.

114. **The Minor Poets** who surrounded Pope in the first two-thirds of his life did not approach his genius. Richard Blackmore endeavoured to restore the epic in his *Prince Arthur*, 1695, and Samuel Garth's mock heroic poem of the *Dispensary* appeared along with John Pomfret's poems in 1699. In 1701, Defoe's *Trueborn Englishman* defended William III. against those who said he was a foreigner, and Prior's finest ode the *Carmen Seculare*, took up the same cause. John Philips is known by his Miltonic burlesque of the *Splendid Shilling*, and his *Cyder* was a Georgic of the apple. Matthew Green's *Spleen* and Ambrose Philip's *Pastorals* were contemporary with Pope's first poetry; and Gay's *Shepherd's Week*, six pastorals, 1714, were as lightly wrought as his *Fables*. The political satires of Swift were coarse, but always hit home. Addison celebrated the Battle of Blenheim in the *Campaign*, and his sweet grace is found in some devotional pieces; while PRIOR'S charming ease is best shown in the light narrative poetry which we may say began with him in the reign of William III. In Pope's later life an entirely new impulse came upon poetry, and changed it root and branch. It arose in Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*, 1725, and in Thomson's *Seasons*, 1730, and it rang the knell of the manner and the spirit of the critical school.

115. **The Prose Literature** of Pope's time collects itself round four great names, Swift, Defoe,

Addison, and Bishop Berkeley, and they all exhibit those elements of the age of which I have spoken. JONATHAN SWIFT was the keenest of political partizans. The *Battle of the Books*, or the literary fight about the Letters of Phalaris, and the *Tale of a Tub*, a satire on the Presbyterians and the Papists, made his reputation in 1704 and established him as a satirist. Swift left the Whig for the Tory party, and his political tracts brought him court favour and literary fame. On the fall of the Tory party at the accession of George I., he retired to the Deanery of St. Patrick in Ireland an embittered man, and the *Drapier's Letters* (1724) written against Wood's halfpence, gained him popularity in a country that he hated. In 1726, his inventive genius, his savage satire, and his cruel indignation with life, were all shown in *Gulliver's Travels*. The voyage to Lilliput and Brobdingnag satirised the politics and manners of England and Europe; that to Laputa mocked the philosophers; and the last, to the country of the Houyhnhnms, lacerated and defiled the whole body of humanity. No English is more robust than Swift's, no wit more gross, no life in private and public more sad and proud, no death more pitiable. He died in 1745 hopelessly insane. DANIEL DEFOE was almost as vigorous a political writer as Swift. His vein as a pamphleteer seems to have been inexhaustible, and the style of his tracts was as roughly persuasive as it was popular. Above all he was the journalist. His *Review*, published twice a week for a year, was wholly written by himself; but he "founded, conducted, and wrote for a host of other newspapers," and filled them with every subject of the day. His tales grew out of matters treated of in his journals, and his best art lay in the way he built up these stories out of mere suggestions. "The little art he is truly master of, said one of his contemporaries, is of forging a story and imposing it on the world for truth." His circumstantial inven-

tion, combined with a style which exactly fits it by its simplicity, is the root of the charm of the great story by which he chiefly lives in literature. *Robinson Crusoe*, 1719, equalled *Gulliver's Travels* in truthful representation, and excelled them in invention. The story lives and charms from day to day. With his other tales it makes him our first true writer of fiction. But none of his stories are real novels; that is, they have no plot to the working out of which the characters and the events contribute. They form the transition however from the slight tale and the romance of the Elizabethan time to the finished novel of Richardson and Fielding.

116. **Metaphysical Literature**, which drifted chiefly into theology, was enriched by the work of BISHOP BERKELEY. His *Minute Philosopher* and other works questioned the real existence of matter, and founded on the denial of it an answer to the English Deists, round whom in the first half of the eighteenth century centred the struggle between the claims of natural and revealed religion. Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, and Wollaston, Tindal, Toland, and Collins, on the Deists' side, were opposed by Clarke, by Bentley, whose name is best known as the founder of the true school of classical criticism, by Bishop Butler, and by Bishop Warburton. BISHOP BUTLER'S acute and solid reasoning treated in his *Sermons* the subject of Morals, inquiring what was the particular nature of man, and hence determining the course of life correspondent to this nature. His *Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature*, 1736, endeavours to make peace between authority and reason, and has become a standard book. I may mention here a social satire, *The Fable of the Bees*, by MANDEVILLE, half poem, half prose dialogue, and finished in 1729. It tried to prove that the vices of society are the foundation of civilisation, and is the first of a new set of books

which marked the rise in England of the bold speculations on the nature and ground of society to which the French Revolution gave afterwards so great an impulse.

117. **The Periodical Essay** is connected with the names of JOSEPH ADDISON and SIR RICHARD STEELE. This gay, light, and graceful kind of literature, differing from such Essays as Bacon's as good conversation about a subject differs from a clear analysis of all its points, was begun in France by Montaigne in 1580. Charles Cotton, a wit of Charles II.'s time, retranslated Montaigne's *Essays*, and they soon found imitators in Cowley and Sir W. Temple. But the periodical Essay was created by Steele and Addison. It was at first published three times a week, then daily, and it was anonymous, and both these characters necessarily changed its form from that of an Essay of Montaigne. Steele began it in the *Tatler*, 1709, and it treated of everything that was going on in the world. He paints as a social humourist the whole age of Queen Anne—the political and literary disputes, the fine gentlemen and ladies, the characters of men, the humours of society, the new book, the new play; we live in the very streets and drawing-rooms of old London. Addison soon joined him, first in the *Tatler*, afterwards in the *Spectator*, 1711. His work is more critical, literary, and didactic than his companion's. The characters he introduces, such as Sir Roger de Coverley, are finished studies after nature, and their talk is easy and dramatic. No humour is more fine and tender; and, like Chaucer's, it is never bitter. The style adds to the charm: in its varied cadence and subtle ease it has not been surpassed within its own peculiar sphere in England; and it seems to grow out of the subjects treated of. Addison's work was a great one, lightly done. The *Spectator*, the *Guardian*, and the *Freeholder*, in his hands, gave a better tone to manners, and hence to morals,

and a gentler one to political and literary criticism. The essays published every Friday were chiefly on literary subjects, the Saturday essays chiefly on religious subjects. The former popularised literature, so that culture spread among the middle classes and crept down to the country; the latter popularised religion. "I have brought," he says, "philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses."

THE DRAMA FROM THE RESTORATION TO 1780.

118. **The Drama** after the Restoration took the tone of the court both in politics and religion, but its partizanship decayed under William III., and died in the reign of Queen Anne. The court of Charles II., which the plays now written represented much more than they did the national life, gave the drama the "genteel" ease and the immorality of its society, and encouraged it to find new impulses from the tragedy and comedy of Spain and of France. The French romances of the school of Calprenède and Scudéry furnished plots to the play-writers. The great French dramatists, Corneille, Racine, and Molière were translated and borrowed from again and again. The "three unities" of Corneille, and rime instead of blank verse as the vehicle of tragedy, were adopted, but "the spirit of neither the serious nor the comic drama of France could then be transplanted into England."

Two acting companies were formed on Charles II.'s return, under Thomas Killigrew and D'Avenant; actresses came on the stage for the first time, the ballet was introduced, and scenery began to be largely used. Dryden, whose masterly force was sure to strike the key-note that others followed, began his comedies in 1663, but soon afterwards, following Robert Boyle, Earl of Orrery, who was the father of the *heroic drama*, turned to tragedy in the *Indian Queen*, 1664. His

next play, the *Indian Emperour*, established for a time the heroic couplet as the dramatic verse. His defence of rime in the *Essay on Dramatic Poesy* asserted the originality of the English school, and denied that it followed the French. The masterpiece of the *Conquest of Granada* was followed by the burlesque of the *Rehearsal*, written by the Duke of Buckingham, in which the bombastic extravagance of the heroic plays was ridiculed. Dryden now changed his dramatic manner, and, following Shakspere, "disencumbered himself from rime" in his fine tragedy of *All for Love*, and showed his power of low comedy in the *Spanish Friar*. After the Revolution, his tragedy of *Don Sebastian* ranks high, but not higher than his brilliantly-written comedy of *Amphitryon*, 1690. Dryden is the representative dramatist of the Restoration. Among the tragedians who followed his method and possessed their own, those most worthy of notice are Nat Lee (1650–90), whose *Rival Queens*, 1667, deserves its praise; Thomas Otway, whose two pathetic tragedies, the *Orphan* and *Venice Preserved*, still keep the stage; and Thomas Southerne whose *Fatal Marriage*, 1694, was revived by Garrick.

It was in comedy, however, that the dramatists excelled. Etherege, Sedley, Mrs. Behn, Lacy, and Shadwell carry on to the Revolution that light Comedy of Manners which William Wycherley's (1640–1715) gross vigour and natural plots lifted into an odious excellence in such plays as the *Country Wife* and the *Plain Dealer*. Three great comedians followed Wycherley—William Congreve (1672–1728), whose well-bred ease is almost as remarkable as his brilliant wit; Sir John Vanbrugh (1666(?)–1726), and George Farquhar (1678–1707), both of whom have quick invention, but the gaiety and ease of Vanbrugh is superior to that of Farquhar. The indecency of all these writers is infamous, but it is partly forgotten in their swift and sustained vivacity.

This immorality produced Jeremy Collier's famous attack on the stage, 1698; and the growth of a higher tone in society, uniting with this attack, began to purify the drama, though Mrs. Centlivre's comedies, during the reign of Queen Anne, show no trace of purity. Steele, at this time, whose *Lying Lover* makes him the father of *sentimental comedy*, wrote all his plays with a moral purpose. Nicholas Rowe, whose melancholy tragedies "are occupied with themes of heroic love," is dull, but never gross; while Addison's ponderous tragedy of *Cato*, 1713, praised by Voltaire as the first *tragédie raisonnable*, in its total rejection of the drama of nature for the classical style, "definitely marks an epoch in the history of English tragedy, an epoch of decay, on which no recovery has followed." Comedy, however, had still a future. The *Beggars' Opera* of Gay, 1728, revived an old form of drama in a new way. Colley Cibber carried on into George II.'s time the light and the sentimental comedy; Fielding made the stage the vehicle of criticism on the follies, literature, and politics of his time; and Foote and Garrick did the same kind of work in their farces.

The influence of the Restoration drama continues, past this period, in the manner of Goldsmith and Sheridan who wrote between 1768 and 1778; but the exquisite humour of Goldsmith's *Goodnatured Man* and *She Stoops to Conquer*, and the wit, almost as brilliant and more epigrammatic than Congreve's, of Sheridan's *Rivals* and the *School for Scandal*, are not deformed by the indecency of the Restoration. Both were Irishmen, but Goldsmith has more of the Celtic grace and Sheridan of the Celtic wit. The sentimental comedy was carried on into the next age by Macklin, Murphy, Cumberland, the Colmans, and many others, but we may say that with Sheridan the history of the elder English Drama closes. That which belongs to our century is a different thing.

CHAPTER VII.

PROSE LITERATURE FROM THE DEATH OF POPE AND OF SWIFT TO THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, AND FROM THE FRENCH REVOLUTION TO DEATH OF SCOTT.

1745—1832.

Richardson's *Pamela*, **1740**.—Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, **1742**.—Smollett's *Roderick Random* and Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*, **1748**.—Fielding's *Tom Jones*, **1749**.—Johnson's *Dictionary*, **1755**.—Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, **1759**.—Hume's *History of England*, completed **1761**—Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield*, **1766**.—Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, **1776**.—Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, completed **1788**.—Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, **1791**.—Burke's *Writings*, from **1756-1797**.—Miss Austen's *Novels*, **1811-1817**.—Scott's *Novels*, **1814-1831**.

119. **Prose Literature.**—The rapid increase of manufactures, science, and prosperity which began with the middle of the eighteenth century is paralleled by the growth of Literature. The general causes of this growth were—

1st, That **a good prose style had been perfected**, and the method of writing being made easy, production increased. Men were born, as it were, into a good school of the art of composition.

2ndly, The **long peace** after the accession of the House of Hanover had left England at rest, and given it wealth. The reclaiming of waste tracts, the increased wealth and trade, made better communication necessary; and the country was soon covered with a network of highways. The leisure gave time to men to think and write: the quicker interchange between the capital and the country spread over England the literature of the capital, and stirred men

everywhere to express his thoughts. The coaching services and the post carried the new book and the literary criticism to the villages, and awoke the men of genius there, who might otherwise have been silent.

3rdly, **The Press** sent far and wide the news of the day, and grew in importance till it contained the opinions and writings of men like Johnson. Such seed produced literary work in the country. *Newspapers* now began to play a larger part in literature. They rose under the Commonwealth, but became important when the censorship which reduced them to a mere broadsheet of news was removed after the Revolution of 1688. The political sleep of the age of the two first Georges hindered their progress; but in the reign of George III., after a struggle with which the name of John Wilkes and the author of the *Letters of Junius* are connected, and which lasted from 1764 to 1771, the press claimed and obtained the right to criticise the conduct and measures of Ministers and Parliament and the King; and the further right to publish and comment on the debates in the two Houses.

4thly, **Communication with the Continent** had increased during the peaceable times of Walpole, and the wars that followed made it still easier. With its increase two new and great outbursts of literature told upon England. France sent the works of Montesquieu, of Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, D'Alembert, and the rest of the liberal thinkers who were called the Encyclopædists, to influence and quicken English literature on all the great subjects that belong to the social and political life of man. Afterwards, the fresh German movement, led by Lessing and others, and carried on by Goethe and Schiller, added its impulse to the poetical school that arose in England along with the French Revolution. These were the general causes of the rapid growth of literature from the time of the death of Swift and Pope.

120. **Prose Literature between 1745 and the**

French Revolution may be said to be bound up with the literary lives of one man and his friends. SAMUEL JOHNSON, born in 1709, and whose first prose work, the *Life of Savage*, appeared in 1744, was the last representative of the literary king, who, like Dryden and Pope, held a court in London. Poor and unknown, he worked his way to fame, and his first poem, the *London*, 1738, satirized the town where he loved to live. He carried on the periodical essays in the *Rambler* and *Idler*, 1750–52, but in them grace and lightness, the essence of this kind of essay, were lost. Several other series followed and ceased in 1787, but the only one worth reading, for its fanciful stories and agreeable satire of the manners of the time, is Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*. Driven by poverty, Johnson undertook a greater work; the *Dictionary of the English Language*, 1755—and his celebrated letter to Lord Chesterfield concerning its publication, gave the death-blow to patronage, and makes Johnson the first of the modern literary men who, independent of patrons, live by their pen and find in the public their only paymaster. He represents thus a new class. In 1759 he set on foot the Didactic Novel in *Rasselas*, and in 1781 his *Lives of the Poets* lifted Biography into a higher place in literature. But he did even more for literature as a converser, as the chief talker of a literary club, than by writing, and we know exactly what a power he was by the vivid *Biography*, the best in our language, which JAMES BOSWELL, with fussy devotedness, made of his master in 1791. Side by side with Johnson stands Oliver Goldsmith, whose graceful and pure English is a pleasant contrast to the loaded Latinism of Johnson's style. The *Vicar of Wakefield*, the *History of Animated Nature* are at one in charm, and the latter is full of that love of natural scenery, the sentiment of which is absent from Johnson's *Journey to the Western Isles*. Both these men were masters of

Miscellaneous Literature, and in that class, I mention here, as belonging to the latter half of the eighteenth century, Edmund Burke's *Vindication of Natural Society*, a parody of Bolingbroke; and his *Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, a book which in 1757 introduced him to Johnson. Nor ought we to forget Sir Joshua Reynolds, another of Johnson's friends, who first made English Art literary in his *Discourses on Painting;* nor Horace Walpole, whose *Anecdotes of Painting*, 1761, still please; and whose familiar *Letters*, malicious, light as froth, but amusing, retail with liveliness all the gossip of the time.

121. **The Novel.**—"There is more knowledge of the heart," said Johnson, "in one letter of Richardson's than in all *Tom Jones*," and the saying introduces SAMUEL RICHARDSON and HENRY FIELDING, the makers of the Modern Novel. Wholly distinct from merely narrative stories like Defoe's, the true novel is a story wrought round the passion of love to a tragic or joyous conclusion. Its form, far more flexible than that of the drama, admits of almost infinite development. The whole of human life, at any time, at any place in the world, is its subject, and its vast sphere accounts for its vast production. *Pamela*, 1740, appeared while Pope was yet alive, and was the first of Richardson's novels. Like *Clarissa Harlowe*, 1748, it was written in the form of letters. The third of these books was *Sir Charles Grandison*. They are novels of Sentiment, and their purposeful morality and religion mark the change which had taken place in the morals and faith of literature since the preceding age.

Clarissa Harlowe is a masterpiece. Richardson himself is mastered day by day by the passionate creation of his characters: and their variety and the variety of their passions are drawn with a slow, diffusive, elaborate intensity which penetrates into the subtlest windings of the human heart. But all

the characters are grouped round and enlighten Clarissa, the pure and ideal star of womanhood. The pathos of the book, its sincerity, its minute reality have always, but slowly, impassioned its readers, and it stirred as absorbing an interest in France as it did in England. "Take care," said Diderot, "not to open these enchanting books, if you have any duties to fulfil." HENRY FIELDING followed Pamela with *Joseph Andrews*, 1742, and Clarissa with *Tom Jones*, 1749. At the same time, in 1748, appeared TOBIAS SMOLLETT'S first novel, *Roderick Random*. Both wrote many other stories, but in the natural growth and development of the story, and in the infitting of the characters and events towards the conclusion, Tom Jones is the English model of the novel. The constructive power of Fielding is absent from Smollett, but in mere inventive tale-telling and in cynical characterisation, he is not easily equalled. Fielding draws English life both in town and country with a coarse and realistic pencil: Smollett is led beyond the truth of nature into caricature. Ten years had thus sufficed to create a wholly new literature.

LAURENCE STERNE published the first part of *Tristram Shandy* in the same year as *Rasselas*, 1759. *Tristram Shandy* and the *Sentimental Journey* are scarcely novels. They have no plot, they can scarcely be said to have any story. The story of *Tristram Shandy* wanders like a man in a labyrinth, and the humour is as labyrinthine as the story. Its humourous note is very remote and subtle; and the sentiment is sometimes true, but mostly affected. But a certain unity is given to the book by the admirable consistency of the characters. A little later, in 1766, Goldsmith's *Vicar of Wakefield* was the first, and perhaps the most charming, of all those novels which we may call idyllic, which describe in a pure and gentle style the simple loves and lives of country people. Lastly,

but still in the same circle of Johnson's friends, Miss Burney's *Evelina*, 1778, and her *Cecilia*, in which we detect Johnson's Roman hand, were the first novels of society.

122. **History** shared in the progress made after 1745 in prose writing, and was raised into the rank of literature by three of Johnson's contemporaries. All of them were influenced by the French school, by Montesquieu and Voltaire. DAVID HUME'S *History of England*, finished in 1761, is, in the writer's endeavour to make it a philosophic whole, in its clearness of narrative and purity of style, our first literary history. But he is neither exact, nor does he care to be exact. He does not love his subject, and he wants sympathy with mankind and with his country. His manner is the manner of Voltaire, passionless, keen, and elegant. DR. ROBERTSON, Hume's friend, and also a Scotchman, was a careful and serious, but also a cold writer. His Histories of Scotland, of Charles V., and of America show how historical interest again began to reach beyond England. Their style is literary, but they fail in philosophical insight and in imagination. EDWARD GIBBON, whose *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, completed in 1788, gave a new impulse and a new model to historical literature. had no more sympathy with humanity than Hume, and his irony lowers throughout the human value of his history. But he had creative power, originality, and the imagination of his subject. It was at Rome in 1764, while musing amid the ruins of the Capitol, that the idea of writing his book started to his mind, and his conception of the work was that of an artist. Rome, eastern and western, was painted in the centre of the world, dying slowly like a lion. Around it and towards it he drew all the nations and hordes and faiths that wrought its ruin; told their stories from the beginning, and the results on themselves and on the world of their victories over Rome. This imaginative conception,

together with the collecting and use of every detail of the arts and costumes and manners of the times he described, the reading and use of all the contemporary literature, the careful geographical detail, the marshalling of all this information with his facts, the power with which he moved over this vast arena, and the use of a full, but too grandiose a style, to give importance to the subject, makes him the one historian of the eighteenth century, whom modern research recognises as its master. Only in two chapters, the famous ones on Christianity, out of seventy-one, and during twenty-three years of work, does Gibbon yield to the prejudice which is the common fault of historians.

123. **Philosophical and Political Literature.**—Hume, following Locke, inquired into the nature of the human understanding, and based philosophy upon psychology. He constructed a science of man; and finally limited all our knowledge of reality to the world of phenomena revealed to us by experience. In morals he made utility the only measure of virtue. The first of his books, the *Treatise of Human Nature*, 1739, was written in France, and was followed by the *Philosophical Essays* in 1748, and by the *Inquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* in 1751. The *Dialogues on Natural Religion* were not published till after his death. These were his chief philosophical works. But in 1741–42, he published two volumes of *Essays Moral and Political*, from which we might infer a political philosophy; and in 1752 the *Political Discourses* appeared, and they have been fairly said to be the cradle of political economy. But that subject was afterwards taken up by ADAM SMITH, a friend of Hume's, whose book on the *Moral Sentiments*, 1759, classes him also with the philosophers of Scotland. His *Wealth of Nations*, 1776, by its theory that labour is the source of wealth, and that to give the labourer absolute freedom to pursue his own interest in his own way is the best means of increasing the wealth of the

country; by its proof that all laws made to restrain, or to shape, or to promote commerce, were stumbling-blocks in the way of the wealth of a state, he created the Science of Political Economy, and started the theory and practice of Free Trade. All the questions of labour and capital were now placed on a scientific basis, and since that time the literature of the whole of the subject has engaged great thinkers. As the immense increase of the industry, wealth, and commerce of the country from 1720 to 1770 had thus stirred inquiry into the laws which regulate wealth, so now the Methodist movement, beginning in 1738, awoke an interest in the poor, and gave the first impulse to popular education. Social Reform became a literary subject, and fills a large space until 1832, when political reform brought forward new subjects, and the old subjects under new forms. This new philanthropy was stirred into further growth by the theories of the French Revolution, and these theories, taking violent effect in France, roused into opposition the genius of Edmund Burke. Unlike Hume, whose politics were elaborated in the study, Burke wrote his political tracts and speeches face to face with events and upon them. Philosophical reasoning and poetic passion were wedded together in them on the side of Conservatism, and every art of eloquence was used with the mastery that imagination gives. In 1766 he defended Lord Rockingham's administration; he was then wrongly suspected of the authorship of the *Letters of Junius*, political invectives (1769-72), whose trenchant style has preserved them to this day. Burke's *Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents*, 1773, perhaps the best of his works in point of style, maintained an aristocratic government; and the next year appeared his famous *Speech on American Taxation*, while that on *American Conciliation*, 1775, was answered by his friend Johnson in *Taxation no Tyranny*. The most powerful of his

works were the *Reflections on the French Revolution*, 1790, and the *Letters on a Regicide Peace* (1796-97). The first of these, answered by Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man*, and by James Mackintosh's *Vindiciæ Gallicæ*, spread over all England a terror of the principles of the Revolution; the second doubled the eagerness of England to carry on the war with France. All his work is more literature than oratory. Many of his speeches enthralled their hearers, but many more put them to sleep. The very men, however, who slept under him in the House read over and over again the same speech when published with renewed delight. Goldsmith's praise of him—that he "wound himself into his subject like a serpent"—gives the reason why he sometimes failed as an orator, why he always succeeded as a writer.

124. **Prose from 1789-1832. Miscellaneous.**—The death of Johnson marks a true period in our later prose literature. London had ceased then to be the only literary centre. Books were produced in all parts of the country, and Edinburgh had its own famous school of literature. The doctrines of the French Revolution were eagerly supported and eagerly opposed, and stirred like leaven through a great part of the literary work of England. Later on, through Coleridge, Scott, Carlyle, and others, the influence of Goethe and Schiller, of the new literature of Germany, began to tell upon us, in theology, in philosophy, and even in the novel. The great English Journals, the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Times*, the *Morning Post*, the *Morning Herald*, were all set on foot between 1775 and 1793, between the war with America and the war with France; and when men like Coleridge and Canning began to write in them the literature of journalism was started. A Literature especially directed towards Education arose in the *Cyclopædias*, which began in 1778, and rapidly developed into vast Dictionaries of kn

ledge. Along with them were the many series issued from Edinburgh and London of *Popular Miscellanies*. A crowd of literary men found employment in writing about books rather than in writing them, and the Literature of Criticism became a power. The *Edinburgh Review* was established in 1802, and the *Quarterly*, its political opponent, in 1808, and these were soon followed by *Fraser's* and *Blackwood's Magazine*. Jeffrey, Professor Wilson, Sydney Smith, and a host of others wrote in these on contemporary events and books. Interest in contemporary stimulated interest in past literature, and Coleridge, Charles Lamb, Thomas Campbell, Hazlitt, Southey, and Savage Landor carried on that study of the Elizabethan and earlier poets to which Warton had given so much impulse in the eighteenth century. Literary quarrels concerning the schools of poetry produced books like Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*; and Wordsworth's Essays on his own art are in admirable prose. DE QUINCEY, one of the Edinburgh school, is, owing to the peculiar and involved melody of his style, one of our first, as he is one of our most various miscellaneous writers: and with him for masculine English, for various learning and forcible fancy, and, not least, for his vigorous lyrical work and poems, we may rank WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR, who deepened an interest in English and classic literature. CHARLES LAMB'S fineness of perception was shown in his criticisms on the old dramatists, but his most original work was the *Essays of Elia*, in which he renewed the lost grace of the essay, and with a humour not less gentle, but more subtle than Addison's.

125. **Theological Literature** had received a new impulse in 1738-91 from the evangelising work of John Wesley and Whitfield; and their spiritual followers, John Scott, Newton, and Cecil, made by their writings the Evangelical school. William Paley, in his *Evidences*, defended Christianity from the common-

sense point of view; while the sermons of Robert Hall and of Dr. Chalmers are, in different ways, fine examples of devotional and philosophical eloquence.

126. The eloquent intelligence of Edinburgh continued the **Literature of Philosophy** in the work of Dugald Stewart, Reid's successor, and in that of Dr. Browne, who for the most part opposed Hume's fundamental idea that Psychology is a part of the Science of Life. Coleridge brought his own and the German philosophies into the treatment of theological questions in the *Aids to Reflection*, and into various subjects of life in the *Friend*. The utilitarian view of morals was put forth by Jeremy Bentham with great power, but his chief work was in the province of Law. He founded the Philosophy of Jurisprudence, he invented a scientific legal vocabulary, and we owe to him almost every reform that has improved our Law. He wrote also on political economy, but that subject was more fully developed by Malthus, Ricardo, and James Mill.

127. **Biography** and **travel** are linked at many points to history, and the literature of the former was enriched by Hayley's *Cowper*, Southey's *Life of Nelson*, McCrie's *Life of Knox*, Moore's *Life of Byron*, and Lockhart's *Life of Scott*. As to travel, it has rarely produced books which may be called literature, but the works of biographers and travellers have brought together the materials of literature. Bruce left for Africa in 1762, and in the next seventy years Africa, Egypt, Italy, Greece, the Holy Land, and the Arctic Regions were made the common property of literary men.

128. **The Historical School** produced Mitford's *History of Greece*, 1810, and Lingard's *History of England*, 1819; but it was Henry Hallam who for the first time wrote history in this country without a grain of prejudice. His *Europe during the Middle Ages*, 1818, is distinguished by its exhaustive and judicial summing-

up of facts, and his *Constitutional History of England* set on foot a new kind of history in the best way. Since his time, impelled by Macaulay, Dean Milman, and others, history has become more and more worthy of the name of fine literature, and the critical schools of our own day, while making truth the first thing, and the philosophy of history the second, do not disdain but exact the graces of literature. But of all the forms of prose literature, the novel was the most largely used and developed.

129. **The Novel.**—The stir of thought made by the French Revolution had many side influences on novel-writing. The political stories of Thomas Holcroft and William Godwin opened a new realm to the novelist. The *Canterbury Tales* of Sophia and Harriet Lee, and the wild and picturesque tales of Mrs. Radcliffe introduced the Romantic Novel. Mrs. Inchbald's *Simple Story*, 1791, started the novel of Passion, while Mrs. Opie made domestic life the sphere of her graceful and pathetic stories, 1806. Miss Edgeworth in her Irish stories gave the first impulse to the novel of national character, and in her other tales to the novel with a moral purpose, 1801–11. Miss Austen, "with an exquisite touch which renders commonplace things and characters interesting from truth of description and sentiment," produced the best novels we have of everyday society, 1811–17. With the peace of 1815 arose new forms of fiction; and travel, now popular, gave birth to the tale of foreign society and manners; of these, Thomas Hope's *Anastasius* (1819) was the first. The Classical Novel arose in Lockhart's *Valerius*, and Miss Ferrier's humorous tales of Scottish life were pleasant to Walter Scott.

It was WALTER SCOTT, however, who raised the whole of the literature of the novel into one of the great influences that bear on human life. Men are still alive who remember the wonder and delight with

which *Waverley* (1814) was welcomed. The swiftness of work combined with vast diligence which belongs to very great genius belonged to him. *Guy Mannering* was written in six weeks, and the *Bride of Lammermoor*, as great in fateful pathos as *Romeo and Juliet*, but more solemn, was done in a fortnight. There is then a certain *abandon* in his work which removes it from the dignity of the ancient writers, but we are repaid for this loss by the intensity, and the animated movement, and the inspired delight with which he invented and wrote his stories. It is not composition; it is Scott actually present in each of his personages, and speaking their thoughts. His National tales — and his own country was his best inspiration — are written with such love for the characters and the scenes, that we feel his joy and love underneath each of the stories as a completing charm, as a spirit that enchants the whole. And in these tales his own deep kindliness, his sympathy with human nature, united, after years of enmity, the Highlands to the Lowlands. In the vivid portraiture and dramatic reality of such tales as *Old Mortality* and *Quentin Durward* he created the Historical novel. "All is great," said Goethe, speaking of one of these historical tales, "in the Waverley Novels; material, effect, characters, execution." In truth, so natural is Scott's invention, that it seems creation. Everything speaks in the tale and to the tale, and the landscape is woven through the events and in harmony with them. His comprehensive power, which drew with the same certainty so many characters in so many various classes, was the direct result of his profound sympathy with the simpler feelings of the human heart, and of his pleasure in writing so as to make human life more beautiful and more good in the eyes of men. He was always romantic, and his romance did not fail him when he came to be old. Like Shakspere he kept that to

the very close. The later years of his life were dark, but the almost unrivalled nobleness of his battle against ill fortune prove that he was as great hearted as he was great. "God bless thee, Walter, my man," said his uncle, "thou hast risen to be great, but thou wast always good." His last tale of power was the *Fair Maid of Perth* (1828), and his last effort, in 1831, was made the year before he died. That year, 1832, which saw the deaths of Goethe and Scott, is the close of an epoch in literature.

CHAPTER VIII.

POETRY, FROM 1730 TO 1832.

Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*, **1725**.—Thomson's *Seasons*, **1730**.—Gray and Collins, *Poems*, **1746-1757**.—Goldsmith's *Traveller*, **1764**.—Chatterton's *Poems*, **1770**.—Blake's *Poems*, **1777-1794**.—Crabbe's *Village*, **1783**.—Cowper's *Task*, **1785**.—Burns's *first Poems*, **1786**.—Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope*, **1799**.—Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads*, **1798**, his *Prelude*, **1806**; *Excursion*, **1814**.—Coleridge's *Christabel*, **1805**.—Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, *Marmion*, *Lady of the Lake*, **1805-8-10**.—Byron's *Poems*, **1807-1823**.—Shelley's *Poems*, **1813-1821**.—Keats' *Poems*, **1817-1820**. Tennyson's *first Poems*, **1830**.

130. **The Elements and Forms of the New Poetry.**—The poetry we are now to study may be divided into *two periods*. The first dates from about the middle of Pope's life, and closes with the publication of Cowper's *Task*, 1785; the second begins with the *Task* and closes in 1832. The first is not wrongly called a time of transition. The influence of the poetry of the past lasted; new elements were added to poetry, and new forms of it took shape.

There was a change also in the style and in the subject of poetry. Under these heads I shall bring together the various poetical works of this period.

(1.) *The influence of the didactic and satirical poetry of the critical school lingered* among the new elements which I shall notice. It is found in Johnson's two satires on the manners of his time, the *London*, 1738, and the *Vanity of Human Wishes*, 1749; in Robert Blair's dull poem of *The Grave*, 1743; in Edward Young's *Night Thoughts*, 1743, a poem on the immortality of the soul, and in his satires on *The Universal Passion of Fame;* in the tame work of Richard Savage, Johnson's poor friend; and in the short-lived but vigorous satires of Charles Churchill, who died in 1764, twenty years after Savage. The *Pleasures of the Imagination*, 1744, by Mark Akenside, belongs also in spirit to the time of Queen Anne, and was suggested by Addison's essays in the *Spectator* on imagination.

(2.) *The study of the Greek and Latin classics revived*, and with it a more artistic poetry. Not only correct form, which Pope attained, but beautiful form also was sought after. Men like THOMAS GRAY and WILLIAM COLLINS strove to pour into their work that simplicity of beauty which the Greek poets and Italians like Petrarca had reached as the last result of genius restrained by art. Their best poems, published between 1746 and 1757, are exquisite examples of English work wrought in the spirit of the imaginative scholar and the moralist. The affectation of the age touches them now and again, but their manner, their way of blending together natural feeling and natural scenery, their studious care in the choice of words are worthy of special study.

(3.) *The study of the Elizabethan and the earlier poets like Chaucer, and of the whole course of poetry in England, was taken up with great interest.* Shakspere and Chaucer had engaged both Dryden and Pope; but the whole subject was now enlarged. Gray like

Pope projected a history of English poetry, and his *Ode on the Progress of Poesy* illustrates this new interest. Thomas Warton wrote his *History of English Poetry*, 1774-78, and in doing so suggested fresh material to the poets. They began to take delight in the childlikeness and naturalness of Chaucer as distinguished from the artificial and critical verse of the school of Pope. Shakspere was studied in a more accurate way. Pope's, Theobald's, Sir Thomas Hanmer's, and Warburton's editions of Shakspere were succeeded by Johnson's in 1765; and Garrick the actor began the restoration of the genuine text of Shakspere's plays for the stage.

Spenser formed the spirit and work of some poets, and T. Warton wrote an essay on the *Faerie Queen*. William Shenstone's *Schoolmistress*, 1742, was one of these Spenserian poems, and so was the *Castle of Indolence*, 1748, by James Thomson, author of the *Seasons*. James Beattie, in the *Minstrel*, 1771, also followed the stanza and manner of Spenser.

(4.) A new element—*interest in the romantic past*—was added by the publication of Dr. Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, 1765. The narrative ballad and the narrative romance, afterwards taken up and perfected by Sir Walter Scott, now struck their roots afresh in English poetry. Men began to seek among the ruder times of history for wild, natural stories of human life; and the pleasure in these increased and accompanied the growing love of lonely, even of savage scenery. The *Ossian*, 1762, of James Macpherson, which asserted itself as a translation of Gaelic epic poems, is an example of this new element. Still more remarkable in this way were the poems of THOMAS CHATTERTON, the "marvellous boy," who died by his own hand, in 1770, at the age of seventeen. He pretended to have discovered, in a muniment room at Bristol, the *Death of Sir Charles Bawdin*, and other poems, by an imaginary monk

named Thomas Rowley. Written with quaint spelling, and with a great deal of lyrical invention, they raised around them a great controversy. As an instance of the same tendency, even before the *Reliques*, we mention Gray's translations from the Norse and British poetry, and his poem of the *Bard*, in which the bards of Wales are celebrated.

131. **Change of Style.**—We have seen how the natural style of the Elizabethan poets had ended by producing an unnatural style. In reaction from this the critical poets set aside natural feeling, and wrote according to frigid rules of art. Their style lost life and fire; and losing these, lost art, which has its roots in emotion, and gained artifice, which has its roots in intellectual analysis. Unwarmed by any natural feeling, it became as unnatural a style, though in a different way, as that of the later Elizabethan poets. We may sum up then the whole history of the style of poetry from Elizabeth to George I.—the style of Milton being excepted—in these words: *Nature without Art, and Art without Nature, had reached similar but not identical results in style.* But in the process two things had been learned. First, that artistic rules were necessary—and secondly, that natural feeling was necessary, in order that poetry should have a style fitted to express nobly the emotions and thoughts of man. The way was therefore now made ready for a style in which the Art should itself be Nature, and it found its first absolute expression in a few of Cowper's lyrics. His style, in such poems as the *Lines to his Mother's Picture*, and the *Loss of the Royal George*, arises out of the simplest pathos, and yet is almost as pure in expression as Greek poetry. The work was then done; but the element of fervent passion did not enter into poetry until 1789.

132. **Change of Subject. — Nature.** — The Poets have always worked on two great subjects—

Man and Nature. Up to the age of Pope the subject of Man was alone treated, and we have seen how many phases it went through. There remained the subject of Nature and of man's relation to it; that is, of the visible landscape, sea, and sky, and all that men feel in contact with them. Natural scenery had been hitherto only used as a background to the picture of human life. It now began to occupy a much larger space in poetry, and after a time grew to occupy a distinct place of its own apart from Man. It is the growth of this new subject which will engage us now.

133. **The Poetry of Natural Description.**—We have already found traces in the poets, but chiefly among the Puritans, of a pleasure in rural things and the emotions they awakened. But Nature is only, as in the work of Marvell and Milton, incidentally introduced. The first poem devoted to natural description appeared, while Pope was yet alive, in the very midst of the town poetry. It was the *Seasons* 1726-30; and it is curious, remembering what I have said about the peculiar turn of the Scotch for natural description, that it was the work of JAMES THOMSON, a Scotchman. It described the scenery and country life of Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. He wrote with his eye upon their scenery, and even when he wrote of it in his room, it was with "a recollected love." The descriptions were too much like catalogues, the very fault of the previous Scotch poets, and his style was always heavy and often cold, but he was the first poet who led the English people into that new world of nature which has enchanted us in the work of modern poetry, but which was entirely impossible for Pope to understand. The impulse he gave was soon followed. Men left the town to visit the country and record their feelings. William Somerville's *Chase*, 1735, and John Dyer's *Grongar Hill*, 1726, a description of a journey in South Wales, and

his *Fleece*, 1757, are full of country sights and scenes: and even Akenside mingled his spurious philosophy with pictures of solitary natural scenery.

Foreign travel now enlarged the love of nature. Gray's letters, some of the best in the English language, describe natural scenery with a minuteness quite new in English Literature. In his poetry he used the description of nature as "its most graceful ornament," but never made it the subject. In the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, and in the *Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College*, natural scenery is interwoven with reflections on human life, and used to point its moral. Collins observes the same method in his *Ode on the Passions* and the *Ode to Evening*. There is as yet but little love of nature for its own sake. A further step was made by OLIVER GOLDSMITH in his *Traveller*, 1764, a sketch of national manners and governments, and in his *Deserted Village*, 1770. He describes natural scenery with less emotion than Collins, and does not moralise it like Gray. The scenes he paints are pure pictures, and he has no personal interest in them. The next step was made by men like the two Wartons and by John Logan, 1782. Their poems do not speak of nature and human life, but of nature and themselves. They see the reflection of their own joys and sorrows in the woods and streams, and for the first time the pleasure of being alone with nature apart from men became a distinct element in modern poetry. In the latter poets it becomes one of their main subjects. These were the steps towards that love of nature for its own sake which we shall find in the poets who followed Cowper. One poem of the time almost anticipates it. It is the *Minstrel*, 1771, of JAMES BEATTIE. This poem represents a young poet educated almost altogether by lonely communion with and love of nature, and both in the spirit and treatment of the first part of the story resembles very closely Wordsworth's descrip-

tion of his own education by nature in the beginning of the *Prelude*, and the history of the pedler in the first book of the *Excursion.*

134. **Further Change of Subject.—Man.**—During this time the interest in Mankind, that is, in Man independent of nation, class, and caste, which we have seen in prose, began to influence poetry. One form of it appeared in the interest the poets began to take in men of other nations than England; another form of it—and this was increased by the Methodist revival—was the interest in the lives of the poor. Thomson speaks with sympathy of the Siberian exile and the Mecca pilgrim, and the *Traveller* of Goldsmith enters into foreign interests. His *Deserted Village*, Shenstone's *Schoolmistress*, Gray's *Elegy* celebrate the annals of the poor. Michael Bruce in his *Lochleven* praises the "secret primrose path of rural life," and Dr. John Langhorne in his *Country Justice* pleads the cause of the poor and paints their sorrows. Connected with this new element is the simple ballad of simple love, such as Shenstone's *Jemmy Dawson*, Mickle's *Mariner's Wife*, Goldsmith's *Edwin and Angelina*, poems which started a new type of human poetry, afterwards worked out more completely in the *Lyrical Ballads* of Wordsworth. In a class apart I call attention to the *Song of David*, a long poem written by Christopher Smart, a friend of Johnson's. It will be found in Chambers' "Cyclopædia of English Literature." Composed for the most part in a madhouse, the song has a touch here and there of the overforcefulness and the lapsing thoughts of a half insane brain. But its power of metre and imaginative presentation of thoughts and things, and its mingling of sweet and grand religious poetry ought to make it better known. It is unique in style and in character.

135. **Scottish Poetry** illustrates and anticipates the poetry of the poor and the ballad. We have not

mentioned it since Sir David Lyndsay, for with the exception of stray songs its voice was silent for a century and a half. It revived in ALLAN RAMSAY, a friend of Pope and Gay. His light pieces of rustic humour were followed by the *Tea Table Miscellany* and the *Ever-Green*, collections of existing Scottish songs mixed up with some of his own. Ramsay's pastoral drama of the *Gentle Shepherd*, 1725, is a pure, tender, and genuine picture of Scottish life and love among the poor and in the country. ROBERT FERGUSON deserves to be named because he kindled the muse of Burns, and his occasional pieces, 1773, are chiefly concerned with the rude and humorous life of Edinburgh. The Ballad, always continuous in Scotland, took a more modern but very pathetic form in such productions as *Auld Robin Gray* and the *Flowers of the Forest*, a mourning for those who fell at Flodden Field. The peculiarities I have dwelt on already continue in this revival. There is the same nationality, the same rough wit, the same love of nature, but the love of colour has lessened. With ROBERT BURNS poetry written in the Scotch dialect may be said to say its last word of genius, though it lingered on in JAMES HOGG's pretty poem of *Kilmeny* in *The Queen's Wake*, 1813, and continues a song-making existence to the present day.

136. **The Second Period of the New Poetry.** —The new elements and the changes on which I have dwelt are expressed by three poets—Cowper, Crabbe, and Burns. But before these we must mention the poems of WILLIAM BLAKE, the artist, and for three reasons. (1.) They represent the new elements. *The Poetical Sketches*, written in 1777, illustrate the new study of the Elizabethan poets. Blake imitated Spenser, and in his short fragment of *Edward III.* we hear again the note of Marlowe's violent imagination. A short poem *To the Muses* is a cry for the restoration to English poetry of the old poetic passion it had lost.

In some ballad poems we trace the influence represented by *Ossian* and given by the publication of Percy's *Reliques*. (2.) We find also in his work certain elements which belonged to the second period of which I shall soon speak. The love of animals is one. A great love of children and the poetry of home is another. He also anticipated in 1789 and 1794, when his *Songs of Innocence* and *Experience* were written, the simple natural poetry of ordinary life which Wordsworth perfected in the Lyrical Ballads, 1798. Further still, we find in these poems traces of the democratic element, of the hatred of priestcraft, and of the war with social wrongs which came much later into English poetry. We even find traces of the mysticism and the search after the problem of life that fill so much of our poetry after 1832. (3.) But that which is most special in Blake is his extraordinary reproduction of the spirit, tone, and ring of the Elizabethan songs, of the inimitable innocence and fearlessness which belongs to the childhood of a new literature. The little poems too in the *Songs of Innocence*, on infancy and first motherhood, and on subjects like the *Lamb*, are without rival in our language for simplicity and songful joy. The *Songs of Experience* give the reverse side of the *Songs of Innocence*, and they see the evil of the world as a child with a man's heart would see it—with exaggerated and ghastly horror. Blake stands alone in our poetry, and his work coming where it did, between 1777 and 1794, makes it the more remarkable.

137. **William Cowper's** first poems were the *Olney Hymns*, 1779, written along with John Newton, and in these the religious poetry of Charles Wesley was continued. The profound personal religion, gloomy even to insanity as it often became, which fills the whole of Cowper's poetry, introduced a theological element into English poetry which continually increased till within the last ten years, when it has

gradually ceased. His didactic and satirical poems in 1782 link him backwards to the last age. His translation of Homer, 1791, and of shorter pieces from the Latin and Greek, connects him with the classical influence, his interest in Milton with the revived study of the English Poets. The playful and gentle vein of humour which he showed in *John Gilpin* and other poems, opened a new kind of verse to poets. With this kind of humour is connected a simple pathos of which Cowper is our greatest master. The *Lines to Mary Unwin* and to his *Mother's Picture* prove, with the work of Blake, that pure natural feeling wholly free from artifice had returned to English song. A new element was also introduced by him and Blake—the love of animals and the poetry of their relation to man, a vein plentifully worked by after poets. His greatest work was the *Task*, 1785. It is mainly a description of himself and his life in the country, his home, his friends, his thoughts as he walked, the quiet landscape of Olney, the life of the poor people about him, mixed up with disquisitions on political and social subjects, and at the end, a prophecy of the victory of the Kingdom of God. *The change in it in relation to the subject of Nature is very great.* Cowper is the first of the poets who loves Nature entirely for her own sake. He paints only what he sees, but he paints it with the affection of a child for a flower and with the minute observation of a man. *The change in relation to the subject of Man is equally great.* The idea of *Mankind as a whole* which we have seen growing up is fully formed in Cowper's mind. The range of his interests is as wide as the world, and all men form one brotherhood. All the social questions of Education, Prisons, Hospitals, city and country life, the state of the poor and their sorrows, the question of universal freedom and of slavery, of human wrong and oppression, of just and free government, of international intercourse and union,

and above all the entirely new question of the future destiny of the race as a whole, are introduced by Cowper into English poetry. It is a wonderful change; a change so wonderful that it is like a new world. And though splendour and passion were added by the poets who succeeded him to the new poetry, yet they worked on the thoughts he had begun to express, and he is their forerunner.

138. **George Crabbe** took up the side of the poetry of Man which had to do with the lives of the poor in the *Village*, 1783, and in the *Parish Register*, 1807. In the short tales related in these books we are brought face to face with the sternest pictures of humble life, its sacrifices, temptations, righteousness, love, and crimes. The prison, the workhouse, the hospital, and the miserable cottage are all sketched with a truthfulness perhaps too unrelenting, and the effect of this poetry in widening human sympathies was very great. The *Borough* and *Tales in Verse* followed, and finally the *Tales of the Hall* in 1819. His work wanted the humour of Cowper, and though often pathetic and always forcible, was too forcible for pure pathos. His work on Nature is as minute and accurate, but as limited in range of excellence, as his work on Man. ROBERT BLOOMFIELD, himself a poor shoemaker, added to this poetry of the poor. The *Farmer's Boy*, 1798, and the *Rural Tales*, are poems as cheerful as Crabbe's were stern, and his descriptions of rural life are not less faithful. The kind of poetry thus started long continued in our verse. Wordsworth took it up and added to it new features, and Thomas Hood in short pieces like the *Song of the Shirt* gave it a direct bearing on social evils.

139. One element, the passionate treatment of love, had been on the whole absent from our poetry since the Restoration. It was restored by **Robert Burns.** In his love songs we hear again, only more simply, more directly, the same natural music which in the age

of Elizabeth enchanted the world. It was as a love-poet that he began to write, and the first edition of his poems appeared in 1786. But he was not only the poet of love, but also of the new excitement about Man. Himself poor, he sang the poor. Neither poverty nor low birth made a man the worse—the man was "a man for a' that." He did the same work in Scotland in 1786 which Crabbe began in England in 1783 and Cowper in 1785, and it is worth remarking how the dates run together. As in Cowper, so also in Burns, the further widening of human sympathies is shown in the new tenderness for animals. The birds, sheep, cattle, and wild creatures of the wood and field fill as large a space in the poetry of Burns as in that of Wordsworth and Coleridge. He carried on also the Celtic elements of Scotch poetry, but he mingled them with others specially English. The rattling fun of the *Jolly Beggars* and of *Tam o'Shanter* is united to a lifelike painting of human character which is peculiarly English. A large gentleness of feeling often made his wit into that true humour which is more English than Celtic, and the passionate pathos of such poems as *Mary in Heaven* is connected with this vein of English humour. The special nationality of Scotch poetry is as strong in Burns as in any of his predecessors, but it is also mingled with a larger view of man than the merely national one. Nor did he fail to carry on the Scotch love of nature, though he shows the English influence in using natural description not for the love of nature alone, but as a background for human love. It was the strength of his passions and the weakness of his moral will which made his poetry and spoilt his life.

140. **The French Revolution and the Poets.** —Certain ideas relating to Mankind considered as a whole had been growing up in Europe for more than a century, and we have seen their influence on the work

of Cowper, Crabbe, and Burns. These ideas spoke of natural rights that belonged to every man, and which united all men to one another. All men were by right equal, and free, and brothers. There was therefore only one class, the class of Man; only one nation, the nation of Man, of which all were equal citizens. All the old divisions therefore which wealth and rank and class and caste and national boundaries had made, were put aside as wrong and useless. Such ideas had been for a long time expressed by France in her literature. They were now waiting to be expressed in action, and in the overthrow of the Bastille in 1789, and in the proclamation of the new Constitution in the following year, France threw them abruptly into popular and political form. Immediately they became living powers in the world, and it is round the excitement they kindled in England that the work of the poets from 1790 to 1830 can best be grouped. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey accepted them with joy, but receded from them when they ended in the violence of the Reign of Terror, and in the imperialism of Napoleon. Scott turned from them with pain to write of the romantic past. Byron did not express them themselves, but he expressed the whole of the revolutionary spirit in its action against old social opinions. Shelley took them up after the reaction against them had begun to die away and re-expressed them. Two men, Rogers and Keats, were wholly untouched by them. One special thing they did for poetry. They brought back, by the powerful feelings they kindled in men, passion into its style, into all its work about Man, and through that, into its work about Nature.

141. ROBERT SOUTHEY began his poetical life with the revolutionary poem of *Wat Tyler*, 1794; and between 1802 and 1814 wrote *Thalaba*, *Madoc*, *The Curse of Kehama*, and *Roderick the Last of the Goths*. *Thalaba* and *Kehama* are stories of Arabian and of

Indian mythology. Full of Southey's miscellaneous learning, they are real poems, and have the interest of good narrative and the charm of musical metre, but the finer spirit of poetry is not in them. *Roderick* is the most human and therefore the most poetical. His *Vision of Judgment*, written on the death of George III., and ridiculed by Byron in another *Vision*, proves him to have become a Tory of Tories. SAMUEL T. COLERIDGE could not turn round so completely, but the wild enthusiasm of his early poems was lessened when in 1796 he wrote the *Ode to the Departing Year* and the *Ode to France*. When France, however, ceasing to be the champion of freedom, attacked Switzerland, Coleridge as well as Wordsworth ceased to believe in her, and fell back on the old English ideas of patriotism and of tranquil freedom. Still the disappointment was bitter, and the *Ode to Dejection* is instinct not only with his own wasted life, but with the sorrow of one who has had golden ideals and found them turn in his hands to clay. His best work is but little, but of its kind it is perfect and unique. For exquisite metrical movement and for imaginative phantasy, there is nothing in our language to be compared with *Christabel*, 1805, and *Kubla Khan* and the *Ancient Mariner*, published as one of the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798. The little poem called *Love* is not so good, but it touches with great grace that with which all sympathise. All that he did excellently might be bound up in twenty pages, but it should be bound in pure gold.

142. Of all the poets misnamed Lake Poets, **William Wordsworth** was the greatest. Born in 1770, educated on the banks of Esthwaite, he loved the scenery of the Lakes as a boy, lived among it in his manhood, and died in 1850 at Rydal Mount, close to Rydal Lake. He took his degree in 1791 at Cambridge. The year before he had made a short tour on the Continent and stepped on the French

shore at the very time when the whole land was "mad with joy." The end of 1791 saw him again in France and living at Orleans. He threw himself eagerly into the Revolution, joined the "patriot side," and came to Paris just after the September massacre of 1792. Narrowly escaping the fate of his friends the Brissotins, he got home to England before the execution of Louis XVI. in 1793, and published his *Descriptive Sketches*. His sympathy with the French continued, and he took their side against his own country. He was poor, but his friend Raisley Calvert left him 900*l.* and enabled him to live the simple life he had now chosen, the life of a retired poet. At first we find him at Racedown, where in 1797 he made friendship with Coleridge, and then at Alfoxden, in Somerset, where he and Coleridge planned and published in 1798 the *Lyrical Ballads*. After a winter in Germany with Coleridge, where the *Prelude* was begun, he took a small cottage at Grasmere, and there in 1805-6 finished the *Prelude*, not published till 1850. Another set of the *Lyrical Ballads* appeared in 1802, and in 1814 his philosophical poem the *Excursion*. From that time till his death he produced from his home at Rydal Mount a long succession of poems.

143. **Wordsworth and Nature**.—The *Prelude* is the history of Wordsworth's poetical growth from a child till 1806. It reveals him as the poet of Nature and of Man. His view of Nature was entirely different from that which up to his time the poets had held. Wordsworth said that Nature was alive. It had, he thought, one living soul which, entering into flower, stream, or mountain, gave them each their own life. Between this Spirit in Nature and the Mind of Man there was a pre-arranged harmony which enabled Nature to communicate its own thoughts to Man, and Man to reflect upon them, until an absolute union between them was established. This idea made him the first who loved Nature with a personal love, for

she, being living, and personal, and not only his reflection, was made capable of being loved as a man loves a woman. He could brood on her character, her ways, her words, her life, as he did on those of his wife or sister. Hence arose his minute and loving observation of her and his passionate description of all her life. This was his natural philosophy, and bound up as it was with the idea of God as the Thought which pervaded and made the world, it rose into a Philosophy of God and Nature and Man. But he had a kind of moral philosophy distinct from this, which was no deeper than a lofty and grave morality created in union with a formal Christianity. It has no point of union with his philosophy of Nature and God and Man, and is incapable of imaginative treatment. Naturally then, when it enters his poetry, it is dragged in, and is always prosaic. He is not the poet then; he is the formalist.

144. **Wordsworth and Man.**—The poet of Nature in this special way, Wordsworth is even more the Poet of Man. It is by his close and loving penetration into the realities and simplicities of human life that he himself makes his claim on our reverence as a poet. We have seen the vivid interest that Wordsworth took in the new ideas about man as they were shown in the French Revolution. But even before that he relates in the *Prelude* how he had been led through his love of Nature to honour Man. The shepherds of the Lake hills, the dalesmen, had been seen by him as part of the wild scenery in which he lived, and he mixed up their life with the grandeur of Nature and came to honour them as part of her being. The love of Nature led him to the love of Man. It was exactly the reverse order to that of the previous poets. At Cambridge, and afterwards in the crowd of London and in his first tour on the Continent, he received new impressions of the vast world of Man, but Nature still remained

the first. It was only during his life in France and in the excitement of the new theories and their activity that he was swept away from Nature and found himself thinking of Man as distinct from her and first in importance. But the hopes he had formed from the Revolution broke down. All his dreams about a new life of man were made vile when France gave up liberty for Napoleon; and he was left without love of Nature or care for Man. It was then that his sister Dorothy, herself worthy of mention in a history of literature, led him back to his early love of Nature and restored his mind. Living quietly at Grasmere, he sought in the simple lives of the dalesmen round him for the foundations of a truer view of mankind than the theories of the Revolution afforded. And in thinking and writing of the common duties and faith, kindnesses and truth of lowly men, he found in Man once more

> "an object of delight,
> Of pure imagination and of love."

With that he recovered also his interest in the larger movements of mankind. His love of liberty and hatred of oppression revived. He saw in Napoleon the enemy of man. A whole series of sonnets followed the events on the Continent. One recorded his horror at the attack on the Swiss, another mourned the fate of Venice, another the fate of Toussaint the negro chief; others celebrated the struggle of Hofer and the Tyrolese, others the struggle of Spain. Two thanksgiving odes rejoiced in the overthrow of the oppressor at Waterloo. He became conservative in his old age, but his interest in social and national movements did not decay. He wrote on Education, the Poor Laws, and other subjects. When almost seventy he took the side of the Carbonari, and sympathised with the Italian struggle. He was truly a poet of Mankind. But his chief work was done in his own country and among his own folk; and he is the

foremost singer of those who threw around the lives of homely men and women the glory and sweetness of song. He made his verse "deal boldly with substantial things;" his theme was "no other than the very heart of man;" and his work has become what he desired it to be, a power like one of Nature's. He lies asleep now among the people he loved, in the green churchyard of Grasmere, by the side of the stream of Rothay, in a place as quiet as his life. Few spots on earth are more sacred than his grave.

145. **Sir Walter Scott** was Wordsworth's dear friend, and his career as a poet began when Wordsworth first came to Grasmere, with the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, 1805. *Marmion* followed in 1808, and the *Lady of the Lake* in 1810. These were his best poems; the others, with the exception of some lyrics which touch the sadness and brightness of life with equal power, do not count in our estimate of him. He perfected the narrative poem. In *Marmion* and the *Lady of the Lake* his wonderful inventiveness in narration is at its height, and it is matched by the vividness of his natural description. No poet, and in this he carries on the old Scotch quality, is a finer colourist. Nearly all his natural description is of the wild scenery of the Highlands and the Lowland moorland. He touched it with a pencil so light, graceful, and true, that the very names are made for ever romantic; while his faithful love for the places he describes fills his poetry with the finer spirit of his own tender humanity.

146. Scotland produced another poet in **Thomas Campbell**. His earliest poem, the *Pleasures of Hope*, 1799, belonged in its formal rhythm and rhetoric, and in its artificial feeling for Nature, to the time of Thomson and Gray rather than to the newer time. His later poems, such as *Gertrude of Wyoming* and *O'Connor's Child*, are more natural, but they are not nature. He will chiefly live by his lyrics. *Hohen-*

linden, the *Battle of the Baltic*, the *Mariners of England*, are splendid specimens of the war poetry of England; and the *Song to the Evening Star* and *Lord Ullin's Daughter* are full of tender feeling, and mark the influence of the more natural style that Wordsworth had brought to perfection.

147. **Rogers and Moore.**—The *Pleasures of Memory*, 1792, and the *Italy*, 1812, of Samuel Rogers, are the work of a slow and cultivated mind, and contain some laboured but fine descriptions. The curious thing is that, living apart in a courtly region of culture, there is not a trace in all his work that Europe and England and Society had passed during his life through a convulsion of change. To that convulsion the best work of THOMAS MOORE, an Irishman, may be referred. Ireland during Moore's youth endeavoured to exist under the dreadful and wicked weight of its Penal Code. The excitement of the French Revolution kindled the anger of Ireland into the rebellion of 1798, and Moore's genius into writing songs to the Irish airs collected in 1796. The best of these have for their hidden subject the struggle of Ireland against England. Many of them have great lyrical beauty; they always have soft melody. At times they reach true pathos, but oftenest it is their lightly-lifted gaiety which is delightful, and they all have this excellence, that they are truly things to be sung. He sang them himself in society, and it is not too much to say that they helped by the interest they stirred to further Catholic Emancipation. Moore's Oriental tales in *Lalla Rookh* are chiefly flash and glitter, but they are pleasant reading. His *vers de société* are as light as they are pointed, and his satirical songs and poetical letters, written to assist the Liberal party, are the cleverest of their kind that we possess.

148. **The post-Revolution Poets.**—We turn to very different types of men when we come to

Lord Byron, Shelley and Keats, whom we may call post-Revolution poets.

Of the three, LORD BYRON had most of the quality we may call force. Born in 1788, his *Hours of Idleness*, a collection of short poems, in 1807, was mercilessly lashed in the *Edinburgh Review*. The attack only served to awaken his genius, and he replied with astonishing vigour in the satire of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* in 1809. Eastern travel gave birth to the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*, 1812, to the *Giaour* and the *Bride of Abydos* in 1813, to the *Corsair* and *Lara* in 1814. The *Siege of Corinth*, *Parisina*, the *Prisoner of Chillon*, *Manfred*, and *Childe Harold* were finished before 1819. In 1818 he began a new style in *Beppo*, which he developed fully in the successive issues of *Don Juan*, 1819-1823. During this time he published a number of dramas, partly historical, as his *Marino Faliero*, partly imaginative, as the *Cain*. His life had been wild and useless, but he died in trying to redeem it for the sake of the freedom of Greece. At Missolonghi he was seized with fever, and passed away in April, 1824.

149. **The position of Byron as a poet** is a curious one. He is partly of the past and partly of the present. Something of the school of Pope clings to him; yet no one so completely broke away from old measures and old manners to make his poetry individual, not imitative. At first he has no interest whatever in the human questions which were so strongly felt by Wordsworth and Shelley. His early work is chiefly narrative poetry, written that he might talk of himself and not of mankind. Nor has he any philosophy except that which centres round the problem of his own being. *Cain*, the most thoughtful of his productions, is in reality nothing more than the representation of the way in which the doctrines of original sin and final reprobation affected his own soul. We feel naturally great interest in this strong person-

ality, put before us with such obstinate power, but it wearies at last. Finally it wearied himself. As he grew in power, he escaped from his morbid self, and ran into the opposite extreme in *Don Juan*. It is chiefly in it that he shows the influence of the revolutionary spirit. It is written in bold revolt against all the conventionality of social morality and religion and politics. It claimed for himself and for others absolute freedom of individual act and thought in opposition to that force of society which tends to make all men after one pattern. This was the best result of his work, though the way in which it was done can scarcely be approved. He escaped still more from his diseased self when, fully seized on by the new spirit of setting men free from oppression, he sacrificed his life for the deliverance of Greece.

As *the poet of Nature* he belongs also to the old and the new school. Byron's sympathy with Nature is a sympathy with himself reflected in her moods. But he also escapes from this position of the eighteenth-century poets, and looks on Nature as she is, apart from himself; and this escape is made, as in the case of his poetry of Man, in his later poems. Lastly, it is his colossal power and the ease that comes from it, in which he resembles Dryden, that marks him specially. But it is always more power of the intellect than of the imagination.

150. **In Percy Bysshe Shelley,** on the contrary, the imagination is supreme and the intellect its servant. He produced while yet a boy some worthless tales, but soon showed in *Queen Mab*, 1813, the influence of the revolutionary era, combined in him with a violent attack on the existing forms of religion. The poem is a poor one, but its poverty prophesies greatness. Its chief idea was the new one that had come into literature—the idea of the destined perfection of mankind in a future golden age. One half of Shelley's poetry, and of his heart, was devoted to help

the world towards this idea, and to denounce and overthrow all that stood in its way. The other half was personal, an outpouring of himself in his seeking after the perfect ideal he could not find, and, sadder still, could not even conceive. *Queen Mab* is an example of the first, *Alastor* of the second. The hopes for man with which *Queen Mab* was written grew cold, he himself felt ill and looked for death; the world seemed chilled to all the ideas he loved, and he turned from writing about mankind to describe in *Alastor* the life and wandering and death of a lonely poet. But the *Alastor* who took the poet away from the race was, in Shelley's own thought, a spirit of evil, a spirit of solitude, and his next poem, the *Revolt of Islam*, 1817, unites him again to the interests of mankind. He wrote it with the hope that men were beginning to recover from the apathy and despair into which the failure of the revolutionary ideas had thrown them, and to show them what they should strive and hope for, and destroy. But it is still only a martyr's hope that the poet possesses. The two chief characters, Laon and Cythna, die in their struggle against tyranny, but live again and know that their sacrifice will bring forth the fruit of freedom. The poem itself has finer passages in it than *Alastor*, but as a whole it is inferior to it. It is quite formless. The same year Shelley went to Italy, and renewed health and the climate gave him renewed power. *Rosalind and Helen* appeared, and in 1818 *Julian and Maddalo* was written. In the second of these—a familiar conversation on the story of a madman in San Lazzaro at Venice—his poetry becomes more masculine, and he has for the first time won mastery over his art. The new life and joy he had now gained brought back his enthusiasm for mankind, and he broke out into the splendid lyric drama of *Prometheus Unbound*. Asia, at the beginning of the drama separated from Prometheus, is the all-pervading Love which

in loving makes the universe of nature. When Prometheus is united to Asia, the spirit of Love in Man is wedded to the spirit of Love in Nature, and Good is all in all. The marriage of these two, and the distinct existence of each for that purpose, is the same idea as Wordsworth's differently expressed; and Shelley and he are the only two poets who have touched it philosophically, Wordsworth with most contemplation, Shelley with most imagination. *Prometheus Unbound* is the finest example we have of the working out in poetry of the idea of a regenerated universe, and the fourth act is the choral song of its emancipation. Then, Shelley, having expressed this idea with exultant imagination, turned to try his matured power upon other subjects. Two of these were neither personal nor for the sake of man. The first was the drama of the *Cenci*, the gravest and noblest tragedy since Webster wrote which we possess. It is as restrained in expression as the previous poem is exuberant: yet there is no poem of Shelley's in which passion and thought and imagery are so wrought together. The second was the *Adonais*, a lament for the death of John Keats. It is a poem written by one who seems a spirit about a spirit, and belongs in expression, thought, and feeling to that world above the senses in which Shelley habitually lived. Of all this class of poems, to which many of his lyrics belong, *Epipsychidion* is the most impalpable, but, to those who care for Shelley's ethereal world, the finest poem he ever wrote. Of the same class is the *Witch of Atlas*, the poem in which he has personified divine Imagination in her work in poetry, and all her attendants, and all her doings among men.

As a lyric poet, Shelley, on his own ground, is easily great. Some of the lyrics are purely personal; some, as in the very finest, the *Ode to the West Wind*, mingle together personal feeling and prophetic hope for Man.

Some are lyrics of Nature; some are dedicated to the rebuke of tyranny and the cause of liberty; others belong to the passion of love, and others are written on visions of those "shapes that haunt Thought's wildernesses." They form together the most sensitive, the most imaginative, and the most musical, but the least tangible lyrical poetry we possess.

As the poet of Nature, he had the same idea as Wordsworth, that Nature was alive: but while Wordsworth made the active principle which filled and made Nature to be Thought, Shelley made it Love. As each distinct thing in Nature had to Wordsworth a thinking spirit in it, so each thing had to Shelley a loving spirit in it: even the invisible spheres of vapour sucked by the sun from the forest pool had each their indwelling spirit. We feel then that Shelley, as well as Wordsworth, and for a similar reason, could give a special love to, and therefore describe vividly, each natural thing he saw. He wants the closeness of grasp of nature which Wordsworth and Keats had, but he had the power in a far greater degree than they of describing the cloud-scenery of the sky, and vast realms of landscape. He is in this, as well as in his eye for subtle colour, the Turner of poetry.

Towards the end of his life his verse became overloaded with mystical metaphysics. What he might have been we cannot tell, for at the age of thirty he left us, drowned in the sea he loved, washed up and burned on the sandy spits near Pisa. His ashes lie beneath the walls of Rome, and *Cor cordium*, "Heart of hearts," written on his tomb, well says what all who love poetry feel when they think of him.

151. **John Keats** lies near him, cut off like him ere his genius ripened; not so great, but possessing perhaps greater possibilities of greatness; not so ideal, but for that very reason more naturally at home with nature than Shelley. In one thing he was entirely different from Shelley—he had no care whatever for the

great human questions which stirred Shelley; the present was entirely without interest to him. He marks the close of that poetic movement which the ideas of the Revolution in France had started in England, as Shelley marks the attempt to revive it. Keats, seeing nothing to move him in an age which had now sunk into apathy on these points, went back to Greek and mediæval life to find his subjects, and established, in doing so, that which has been called the *literary poetry* of England. His first subject after some minor poems in 1817 was *Endymion*, 1818, his last, *Hyperion*, 1820. These, along with *Lamia*, were poems of Greek life. *Endymion* has all the faults and all the promise of a great poet's early work, and no one knew its faults better than Keats, whose preface is a model of just self-judgment. *Hyperion*, a fragment of a tale of the overthrow of the Titans, is itself like a Titanic torso, and in it the faults of *Endymion* are repaired and its promise fulfilled. Both are filled with that which was deepest in the mind of Keats, the love of loveliness for its own sake, the sense of its rightful and pre-eminent power; and in the singleness of worship which he gave to Beauty, Keats is especially the artist, and the true father of the latest modern school of poetry. Not content with carrying us into Greek life, he took us back into mediæval romance, and in this also he started a new type of poetry. There are two poems which mark this revival—*Isabella*, and the *Eve of St. Agnes*. *Isabella* is a version of Boccaccio's tale of the *Pot of Basil; St. Agnes Eve* is, as far as I know, invented. Mediæval in subject, they are modern in manner; but they are, above all, of the poet himself. Their magic is all his own. Their originality has caused much imitation of them, but they are too original for imitation. In smaller poems, such as the *Ode to a Grecian Urn*, the poem to *Autumn*, and some sonnets, he is perhaps at his very best. In these and in all, his

painting of Nature is as close, as direct as Wordsworth's; less full of the imagination that links human thought to Nature, but more full of the imagination which broods upon enjoyment of beauty. His career was short; he had scarcely begun to write when death took him away from the loveliness he loved so keenly. Consumption drove him to Rome, and there he died, save for one friend, now also dead, alone. He lies not far from Shelley, on "the slope of green access," near the pyramid of Caius Cestius.

152. **Modern English Poetry.**—Keats marks the exhaustion of the impulse which began with Burns and Cowper. There was no longer now in England any large wave of public thought or feeling such as could awaken poetry. We have then, arising after his death, a number of pretty little poems, having no inward fire, no idea, no marked character. They might be written by any versifier at any time, and express pleasant indifferent thought in pleasant verse. Such were Mrs. Hemans's poems, and those of L. E. L., and such were Tennyson's earliest poems, in 1830. But with the Reform agitation, and the new religious agitation at Oxford, which was of the same date, a new excitement or a new form of the old, came on England, and with it a new tribe of poets arose, among whom we live. The elements of their poetry were also new, though we can trace their beginnings in the previous poetry. It took up the theological, sceptical, social, and political questions which disturbed England. It gave itself to metaphysics and to analysis of human character. It studied and brought to great excellence the idyll. It carried the love of natural scenery into almost every county in England, and described the whole land.

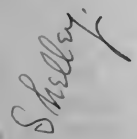
Two of these men stand forth from the rest, and their main work lies behind us. The first of these, ROBERT BROWNING, whose wife will justly share his fame, stands quite alone. He has set himself more

than any other English poet to answer the question—What is the end of life, and what its explanation—and he has answered this in a number of poems, narrative, lyric, dramatic, and ranging from the times of Athens through the Renaissance up to the present day. The principles laid down in reply are always the same, but their exposition is continually varied. He has drawn with a subtle, strange, and minute pencil the characters of men and women, of an age, of a town, of phases of passion, even of sudden moments of passion; and in doing so his imagination has wrought hand in hand with Thought which, inventing as it winds through its subject, has perhaps too much scientific pleasure in itself. Art, music, classical learning, the semipaganism of the Renaissance, the remoter phases of early Christianity, have each, in specialised phases of them, been set vividly into poetry by his work. He has excelled, when he chose, in light narrative, in lyrics of love and of war. Natural scenery, and especially that of Italy, he paints with fire, but he does his best work when the landscape is, like his characters, a special or a strange one. He is an intellectual poet, but neither imagination nor the passion of his subject fail him.

The second of these poets is ALFRED TENNYSON, and he has for more than forty years remained at the head of modern poetry. All the great subjects of his time he has toucned poetically, and enlightened. His feeling for nature is accurate, loving, and of a wide range. His human sympathy fills as wide a field. The large interests of mankind, and of his own time, the lives of simple people, and the subtler phases of thought and feeling which arise in our overwrought society are wisely and tenderly written of in his poems. His drawing of distinct human characters is the best we have in pure poetry since Chaucer wrote. He makes true songs; and he has excelled all English writers in the pure Idyll. The *Idylls of the King* are a kind of

epic, and he has lately tried the drama. In lyrical measures, as in the form of his blank verse, he is as inventive as original. It is by the breadth of his range that he most conclusively takes the first place among the modern poets.

Within the last ten years, the impulse given in '32 has died away and the same thing which we find in the case of Keats has again taken place. A new class of literary poets has arisen, who have no care for a present they think dull, for religious questions to which they see no end. They too have gone back to Greek and mediæval and old Norse life for their subjects. They find much of their inspiration in Italy and in Chaucer; but they continue the love poetry and the poetry of natural description. It is some pity that so much of their work is apart from English subjects. but we need not be ungrateful enough to complain, for Tennyson has always kept us close to the scenery, the traditions, the daily life and the history of England; and his last poem, the drama of *Harold*, 1877, is written almost exactly twelve hundred years since the date of our first poem, Cædmon's *Paraphrase*. To think of one and then of the other, and of the great and continuous stream of literature that has flowed between them, is more than enough to make us all proud of the name of Englishmen.



AMERICAN LITERATURE.

CHAPTER IX.

1647–1883.

SECTION 1. Success of a Literature — the Colonists — Public Schools. 2. Colonial Period. 3 and 4. Jonathan Edwards —his Influence. 5. Benjamin Franklin. 6. A Change. 7. The Federalist. 8. Newspapers and Journalists. 9. Early Novelists. 10. Irving and his Friends. 11. Theological Opinions. 12. Historians. 13. Poetry. 14. Subjects and Readers. 15. Periodicals. 16. Newspapers. 17. Miscellaneous Writers. 18. Political Discussions. 19. Essayists. 20. Later Novelists. 21. Poets of the Present. 22. Novels and Poetry. 23. Female Writers. 24. Fiction for a Purpose. 25. Theological and Biblical Writers. 26. Church Histories. 27. Jurisprudence. 28. Other Authors. 29. The Outlook.

1. **The Success of a Literature** depends quite as much upon the number and intelligence of its readers as upon its authors. Though in theory written to please, it should in addition be joined with the useful; and, whether in prose or poetry, ought to exert an influence that would make one the better for reading it.

The Colonists—the germs of the American nation—brought with them, to a certain extent, the culture, the education, the refinement of the England of that day. This influence led them, even in advance of the mother-land, to introduce public schools. In New England these were begun as soon as needed, and, within less than thirty years from the first

landing at Plymouth, they were established on a firm basis (1647)—the first instance in Christendom when the civil government put in practice the training of an intelligent people by educating *all* its youth; the result has been a nation of readers.

2. **The Literature of the First Century** of the colonial period was but a reflection of that of England; this arose naturally from the intimate relations maintained between the colonists and the mother-country, and in no respect were the former more dependent upon the latter than in this. Though some books and numerous pamphlets were written during this period, yet scarcely a treatise, nor even a pamphlet, survives except as a curiosity; they were elicited by local causes, and were of temporary interest, and, properly speaking, had no material influence in moulding the characteristics of our present literature.

3. We now come to **Jonathan Edwards (1703—1757)**, the metaphysician and theologian; the first American writer to attain a European reputation. With him properly begins American literature, as the influence of his writings passed over the colonial period into the present time. Edwards wrote a number of books, two of which are to-day deemed standard works; the one on *The Religious Affections*, the other on the *Freedom of the Will, and Moral Agency*. The latter, especially, has been subjected to the severest criticism by the ablest theologians and philosophers from time to time, yet in its main positions it still remains apparently as impregnable as ever. At thirteen Edwards entered Yale College. Thoughtful beyond his years, a metaphysician by nature, he studied and appreciated Locke on the *Understanding*. In after-years he displayed in his writings a wonderful power in unravelling the mysteries of the human mind.

4. **The Influence of Edwards** was clearly

seen in the theological literature of the succeeding half-century, and in the writings of certain theologians of New England: Drs. SAMUEL HOPKINS, a pupil of Edwards, and NATHANIEL EMMONS, and TIMOTHY DWIGHT, grandson of Edwards, and President of Yale College. The latter's *Theology Explained and Defended* was published near the end of the century. It was a series of popular sermons, and had an almost unbounded influence upon the religious public, who in that day read, it would seem, more theology in proportion than they do now. Dr. Dwight differed from Edwards on some points, yet in the main holding the same views. This work passed through many editions both in this country and in England. The writings of these men had much to do in shaping the theological opinions of that period. This branch of American literature has been always one of importance.

5. **Benjamin Franklin** (1706—1790), born in Boston, the son of a tallow-chandler, but of limited means, so that at ten years of age the son was taken from school to aid his father in supporting the family, which consisted of *seventeen* children. Fond of books, the thoughtful boy even then showed that practical wisdom which has rendered him famous. He chose the printer's business, thinking it would give him greater facilities for reading. At fifteen he began writing for the *New England Courant*, a paper published by an elder brother, who treated him harshly; and young Franklin, at the age of seventeen, selling what books he had, set out alone to seek his fortune. He came to Philadelphia, where he obtained employment as a journeyman printer, meantime plying his pen incessantly, and always acceptably to his readers. In seven years he became the proprietor of a newspaper. In this he wielded a power in society, in politics, and in literature.

He became a benefactor to the city of his adop-

tion by his efforts in founding a Public Library, Philosophical Society, and an Academy—the germ of the present University of Pennsylvania. He wrote many essays and pamphlets on various subjects, including scientific and moral, meanwhile publishing for twenty-five years *Poor Richard's Almanac*. In this he inculcated his notions of economy, which had a very beneficial effect upon the people. His writings had a marked influence upon the literature of the times; and, even when actively engaged in the public service, he always found time to do good by means of his pen. He was noted for his keenness of perception and common-sense; his imagination was quick, but not extravagant; his mental constitution so evenly balanced that he rarely, if ever, made a mistake as a diplomatist or as a statesman.

6. **A Change.**—Quite a change came over the literature of the period between the close of the French War in 1763 and the beginning of the Revolution in 1775. Questions pertaining to civil liberty and the rights of the colonists crowded out all others, and the discussions on these absorbing themes engaged the writers, the preachers, and the orators of the times, and gave tone to the literature. Prominent among orators in these discussions were JAMES OTIS, JOHN and SAMUEL ADAMS, of Massachusetts; in New York were ALEXANDER HAMILTON and JOHN JAY; in Virginia, PATRICK HENRY, JAMES MADISON, THOMAS JEFFERSON, and others. The numerous speeches and state papers, and other political writings, of these statesmen and their compatriots, are among the treasures of our political history. The collected writings of GEORGE WASHINGTON alone amount to twelve large volumes; these consist of addresses, messages, and letters, all written in a concise and clear style.

7. **The Federalist.**—The period from the close of the Revolution to the adoption of the Constitu-

tion and inauguration of Washington was noted for the many discussions on the form of government to be adopted for the whole country, and for the production of the celebrated *Essays*, now a standard work known as the *Federalist*, written by Jay, Madison, and Hamilton. These *Essays* had evidently a great effect upon the minds of the people; a striking instance of elaborate thoughts and views reaching the common mind by first influencing the more cultured classes, and through them the people.

8. **Newspapers and Journalists.**—From the inauguration of Washington onward was a great increase in newspapers and journalists, of whom many were foreigners, and the first in this country to enter upon journalism as a profession. Their influence in literature was great, and continued till after the War of 1812; soon after which period the American writers seemed to become disenthralled, and cut themselves loose from so close imitation of English models, and bounded forward to attain success in a field of their own. The time came when political questions were less absorbing, and the people turned their attention more to reading on other and general subjects, and writers sprang up to answer the demand.

9. **Early Novelists.**—The harbinger in the field of romance was CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN (1771–1810), a native of Philadelphia. His first work—*Wieland*—was published in 1798; this was followed by three others. As a writer he was graphic in style, not wanting in imagination; but, perhaps owing to his continued ill-health, his stories leave a sombre rather than a cheery impression. He is said to have been the first American author to follow literature as a profession, devoting much of his time in writing for a periodical—*The Literary Magazine*—that he had established.

Then comes JAMES FENIMORE COOPER (1789–1851), a prolific writer of novels, thirty-four in num-

ber, besides several other works, one of which is an elaborate history of the United States Navy. His novels, except the first, *Precaution*, founded on English life, met with unexampled success. *The Spy*, his second, was received with marked favour both in this country and in England, where it was at once republished; each succeeding book added to his reputation. The scenes described were for the most part American, and the stories came home to the people. These books gave evidence of an original genius, while their moral tone was unexceptionable.

10. **Irving and his Friends.**—WASHINGTON IRVING (1783—1859), a native of New York City, stands preëminent among American authors. Blest with an easy, flowing style, and having acute perceptions, he was able to express his thoughts with remarkable clearness, and withal pervading the whole with a quiet humour, or, when appropriate, with a delicate and touching pathos. No author has had so genial an influence on American literature. His writings were numerous—the *Sketch-Book*, perhaps, the most popular—they mostly consisting of sketches and short stories, a humorous history of his native city, and biographies, ending with a *Life of Washington*—a work of love, and the crowning one of his life.

Contemporary with Irving was JAMES K. PAULDING, who for a time was associated with him in conducting a periodical—*Salmagundi*—which was modelled somewhat after the *British Essayists*. Also JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE (who died young), the author of *The Culprit Fay*—"the richest creation of pure fancy in our literature"—and the famous lyric, *The American Flag*. With these was associated FITZ-GREENE HALLECK (1790—1867). They formed a coterie of their own, of which Halleck may be designated the lyric poet.

11. **Theological Opinions.**—American litera-

ture has always been more or less imbued with theological opinions, and sometimes debates have been elicited by differences in the interpretation of the Bible, and in the speculations of theologians. One of the most noted of these controversies, and which lasted for years, was the conflict between the Trinitarians and the Unitarians, the former usually termed the orthodox. The centre was in and around Boston; but it finally took in New England, and afterward extended to New York and New Jersey. In this controversy the people took more than usual interest, as they are accustomed in religious questions, especially those involving vital principles.

The first in influence among Unitarians was WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING (1780—1842), one of the most remarkable literary men of the period; demanding, by his great merits as a charming and vigorous writer, the respect of his opponents, and by his generous and noble nature the admiration and devoted attachment of those who knew him in social life. With Channing were associated ANDREWS NORTON, Professor of Sacred Literature in Harvard, and HENRY WARE, "Hollis Professor" of Divinity in the same. In the orthodox behalf were found Dr. SAMUEL WORCESTER, of Salem, and Professors LEONARD WOODS and MOSES STUART, of Andover. The Unitarians established the *Christian Examiner* as their organ, and the Trinitarians the *Panoplist.* The two periodicals were read by thousands and thousands. It shows the general intelligence of the people at large, that these learned disquisitions were so much read and studied. Into this earnest, but upon the whole courteous, controversy others were also drawn; and LYMAN BEECHER, in the prime of his strength, took part; while the outside theological world—those comprising the Calvinistic wing—were also drawn in, and Professors ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER and CHARLES HODGE, of the Presbyterian Seminary at Princeton,

took part. Meanwhile the ranks of the Unitarians were recruited by Drs. ORVILLE DEWEY, WILLIAM H. FURNESS, and ANDREW P. PEABODY.

12. **Historians.**—In the department of History our literature is rich, and in this respect the last half-century has been prolific. The histories of WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT (1796—1859) and JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY (1814—1877) pertain to foreign countries, as do in part those of FRANCIS PARKMAN. These are all recognized as standard works. The first wrote the *History of Ferdinand and Isabella*, *Conquest of Mexico*, *Conquest of Peru*, *Life of Philip II.*, and other works; the second wrote *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, the *History of the United Netherlands*, and the *Life of John of Barneveld;* and the last wrote *France and England in America*, and *Pontiac's War*.

GEORGE BANCROFT (1800), RICHARD HILDRETH (1807—1865), and GEORGE TUCKER, of Virginia, have written elaborate histories of the United States. The first, in twelve volumes, including the *Formation of the Constitution*, brings the history to 1787; the second brings it down to 1821, in six volumes; the third goes over nearly the same ground as the second. The histories of the United States, for the use of schools, are very numerous, among which those of LOSSING and QUACKENBOS hold a prominent place. PATTON'S *Concise History of the American People* is designed to fill the place between the school histories and the more extensive ones just mentioned. JOHN GORHAM PALFREY has written a very full and complete history of New England. JARED SPARKS has written brief biographies of many prominent Americans, and also edited the writings of George Washington, in twelve volumes, and those of Benjamin Franklin in ten, and likewise the *Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution*.

13. **Poetry.**—American poetry may be compared

with that written in the mother-land within the last half-century, rather than with that of any former time. During this later period the more frequent communication between English and American authors and readers led to a literary sympathy, which allured the poetry of the two countries into similar forms of thought and choice of subjects that required similar treatment.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT (1794—1878) in his poetry is an interpreter of Nature, and equally happy in religious sentiment and love of freedom. All that he has written has been with great skill and unwearying care. His short poems upon subjects drawn from Nature come home to the hearts of his readers. His life was a busy one. Precocious as a boy—for at the age of ten he began to write verses for a neighboring country paper—he never relaxed in his industry as a writer and editor, both literary and political, and no doubt he was the happier for it. Even when he had passed beyond the age allotted to man, he translated, with a poet's grace and appreciation, both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW (1807) began his literary career early, and, not trusting alone to the inspiration of genius, has ever been a diligent student. He has deservedly acquired great popularity both in America and England, where his writings are usually republished. He wrote prose with as much success as poetry, though by the latter he is better known and appreciated. In his writings are found purity of sentiment, nobleness of thought, and a deep sympathy with humanity. His minor pieces have gone into almost every intelligent household in the land, and have had influence for good. Many of his poems are on American subjects; this aids in making them national, and in promoting a taste for a home literature. Such poems are an incentive to patriotism. Who does not know the *Psalm of Life*,

The Reaper and the Flowers? or who has not read *Evangeline*, or been fascinated with the peculiar rhythm of *Hiawatha?* On the fiftieth anniversary of his graduation (1875) from Bowdoin College he read a strikingly beautiful poem, *Morituri Salutamus*, full of manly, generous feeling and noble thoughts. He has written several prose works, and made a translation of the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, deemed far superior to any former one.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER (1807) has been characterized as the poet of freedom and humanity, and richly he deserves the compliment. During the antislavery discussions, his poetry, by its defiant and spirited tone, exerted great influence; and during the Civil War his soul-stirring strains sounded through the land, animating the friends of the nation. His later poems are *Tent on the Beach*, *Snow Bound*, *The Vision of Echard*, and others.

In this connection belong OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809) and JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL (1819), both professors in Harvard, and both filling an honourable place in literature; both humourists, but far more; each writing successfully both prose and poetry; subtile critics, genial but kindly severe; both interested in the *Atlantic Monthly*, the latter for a time its editor, and also of the *North American Review*. Holmes has written a great number of poems, none long, and several books in prose, as *The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*, *The Guardian Angel*, and others. Lowell has written a *Fable for Critics*, *The Biglow Papers*, *Among my Books*, and many others. He has been American Minister to Spain, and also to England.

14. **Subjects and Readers.**—Hosts of writers, male and female, are now assiduously cultivating our field of literature, the greater number of whom draw their inspiration from scenes partaking of domestic life rather than from antiquity or classic ground, or from foreign lands. The majority of those who read

the poetry and light literature of the day are not found so much among the highly educated, but among those, in this respect, the middle classes. Their minds have not been trained to the higher exertion of thought induced by laborious study; but they are by no means deficient in general intelligence, and are thereby able to appreciate the beautiful in Nature or in its description. This great class find in genuine poetical thought, whether in the garb of poetry or in the form of prose, an echo to their own feelings and sympathies in descriptions and sentiments drawn from domestic scenes, and find emotions delineated which they recognise as belonging to themselves. There are millions such, whose only mental luxury is appreciative reading. They are by no means confined to fiction, but are also led to read works of a more substantial character.

15. **Periodicals.**—Our writers of fiction have increased greatly within the last quarter of a century. This class of literature has received an impulse from the establishment of periodicals—monthly or otherwise—of an advanced literary character; it also has had influence in moulding the public taste, and well it may; in them are found some of the best authors, American and English, side by side, engaged in instructing their readers. This is one of the best features of these literary times, that the minds of the reading public are thus brought in contact with the best thoughts of the age, properly expressed in classic English, thus training the minds of the people for a still clearer appreciation of literature, and a higher plane of general culture. Among this class of writers woman sustains her part with tact, great zeal, and success. A graceful versifier, she writes the greater part of the poetry of the papers and periodicals.

16. **Newspapers.** — In connection with this should be mentioned the literature of the newspaper,

aside from its merely furnishing the news of the day. In them are often found discussions of important questions relating to the improvement of society or its material progress. These articles are written by able men, and frequently in a style graceful and racy, and often vigorous and trenchant. Thus the paper becomes a power for good in diffusing knowledge, especially in the notices of books, which treat of so many subjects—history, travels, scientific discoveries, and the moral and industrial movements of the times. The majority of readers are unable to purchase all these books thus noticed, nor have they time to read them; but by this means intelligent men and women can obtain a fair knowledge of books, and of the topics of which they treat.

17. **Miscellaneous Writers.**—There are a host of writers who treat of miscellaneous subjects, and, if space permitted, would deserve mention. Their labors are not without reward and success in their respective fields in promoting a high moral tone of culture and refinement in social life.

18. **Political Discussions.**—The debates in Congress have had influence in moulding that portion of American literature which belongs to politics, as understood in the best sense; for the laws of the Government, and its policy at different times, have always interested the thinking portion of the people. This arises from the nature of the case, when they, as voters, have to do with the government of the nation.

It was a brilliant period in this field when HENRY CLAY, JOHN C. CALHOUN, DANIEL WEBSTER, ROBERT Y. HAYNE, and others, discussed questions of national importance. These discussions have been reported, and are valuable as specimens of eloquence —the contrast between these great leaders is very characteristic.

The Contrast.—Webster's speeches, addresses, ar-

guments, and state papers, read to-day as if imbued with the spirit that inspired them at the moment of delivery—and they are almost as fresh to the reader as they were to the hearer—they glow with the eloquence of thought. Henry Clay's are smooth and elegant, but need the grace, the animation of the orator, who, at the time, by his magnetism, allured his hearers into sympathy with himself, and compelled acquiescence in his arguments. Calhoun, more theoretical than practical, held his hearers by the fascination of easy, flowing sentences, that were designed to support fine-spun theories. His was the eloquence of metaphysics—though persuasive at the time, to his reader cold and plausible.

The Antislavery Agitation poured forth a stream of thrilling eloquence that astonished the country. The pungent addresses and writings of those who opposed the system sounded through the land, and from their very earnestness compelled an audience.

Our literature is rich in the eloquence of statesmen and orators on almost every subject capable of being elucidated by the living speaker. The works and writings of such men and scholars as EDWARD EVERETT, CHARLES SUMNER, WILLIAM H. SEWARD, and many others, are a treasure of great value to the nation.

19. **Essayists.**—We have a series of writings, which take the form of essays, on all subjects connected with man, and in the elucidation of Nature. RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803)—the author of several important works—may be considered the head of this school of writers. They have had great influence in directing the American mind to the study of man in his relations to life and social aims.

The finished style, for the most part, of these writers has had a beneficial effect in improving the literary taste of the reading public. Emerson has written *Representative Men*, *English Traits*, *Letters and*

Social Aims, and other works. In addition to his writings he has often delivered popular lectures. In this respect he has had many imitators, who have lectured on innumerable subjects to audiences in nearly all portions of the Union. These have been very influential in encouraging the formation of literary associations in numerous villages and towns of the country.

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS is the author of a satire on social life—*The Potiphar Papers*—and *Trumps*, a novel. As editor his essays on current topics are very popular and instructive, while his criticisms are just and judicious. He is noted for his graceful style. EDWIN PERCY WHIPPLE, in the main, may be termed an essayist. He has written much in review of books. HENRY D. THOREAU, a recluse, who lived on a small lake near Concord, Massachusetts, wrote several works. *Walden* is reckoned his best.

20. **Later Novelists.**—NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE (1804—1864) holds the first place in the ranks of American writers of fiction. He is most fascinating, possessing delicacy of taste and finish of style, combined with an insight into the human mind most remarkable. He wrote many stories illustrating character, the subjects being taken from New England life at different periods, and also others based on foreign topics—among these, *The House of the Seven Gables*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *Twice-told Tales*, and others. His last work, *The Marble Faun*, is deemed by some his best.

WILLIAM GILMORE SIMMS (1806—1870), of South Carolina, wrote several novels, as well as poems; but by no means limited to these, as he was an indefatigable worker, writing for magazines, and biographies, and histories. His chief novels are *Yemassee* and the *Partisan*. He also wrote a *History of South Carolina*.

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, in her *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, occupied comparatively a new field—the anti-

slavery. It was written for a purpose, and is by far the most popular American novel ever published, judging from its immense sale. Her subsequent works have been superior as to their literary merits—among these are *The Minister's Wooing*, *Oldtown Folks*, *Woman in Sacred History*, *We and our Neighbours*, *The Poganuc People*, and others.

21. **Poets of the Present.**—Among the poets of the present is RICHARD HENRY STODDARD. Though engaged in business duties, he has diligently devoted his leisure hours to poetry and general literature, having edited several collections of poetry. His pieces are generally short, *The Hymn to the Beautiful* being among the first he published.

EDMUND CLARENCE STEDMAN has written much lyric poetry. He wrote a social satire—*The Diamond Wedding—Alice of Monmouth*, and many other pieces. His review of the contemporary poets of England, in his *Victorian Poets*, has placed him in the first rank of appreciative and just critics.

The Civil War was the occasion of much song-writing, some of which will remain as specimens of spirited composition, such as *Sheridan's Ride*, by T. BUCHANAN READ, and the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, by JULIA WARD HOWE.

Of those who have been successful in writing both prose and poetry in a popular manner, perhaps BAYARD TAYLOR is the most striking example. His first book—commenced in his twentieth year—*Views Afoot*, is a graphic description of his travels "on foot" during two years in the countries of Europe. To this were added some eight or nine other books, some of travel and others of story. He composed his poems with astonishing rapidity. He died while the American Minister at the court of Berlin.

JOAQUIN MILLER and FRANCIS BRET HARTE have sung of the wild scenes of California in its earlier days. The descriptions of the manners and

customs of the miners of those times have thrown around their writings the charm of novelty. The former's first efforts were the *Songs of the Sierras*, and the *Heathen Chinee* of the latter had perhaps more readers than any other poem of the time. Both have written short stories successfully, and Harte one or two novels, as *Gabriel Conroy*, and a drama, *Two Men of Sandy Bar*, and *Condensed Novels*.

JOHN GODFREY SAXE, as a poet, is peculiar and successful in travesties and witty combinations of thoughts and fancies, which flow spontaneously, but are so apt and to the point that they are appreciated without an effort by the reader. For this reason he is one of the most pleasing of our poets who have been characterized as humorous.

22. **Novels and Poetry.**—JOHN HAY, a native of Indiana, wrote *Jim Bludso*, describing an original character in an original manner; and many other poems deemed equally striking. He has been complimented by having many imitators. He also wrote *Castilian Days*, a series of Spanish sketches.

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH, whose stories and poems have won for him a reputation as a poet and novel writer. From his first ballad, *Baby Bell*, and novel, *Prudence Palfrey*, to his last story, *The Stillwater Tragedy*, is found the same care in the style, and the same twinkling humour.

JOSIAH GILBERT HOLLAND has written many novels, the scenes of which are drawn from American domestic life, as *The Story of Sevenoaks*, *Arthur Bonnicastle*, and *Nicholas Minturn*. As the editor of an influential magazine he exerted a power, for in his comments on current topics he was as free as he was fearless.

EDWARD EGGLESTON, a native of Indiana, has taken a high rank as a writer. He has the advantage of throwing an interest around a class of subjects and state of society, a quarter of a century ago

on the frontier, that was unexplored. His *Hoosier Schoolmaster* and *Circuit Rider* attracted attention—nor has the interest in his subsequent stories flagged—while *Roxy*, his last, fully sustains his reputation. These novels, from the vivid presentation of their characters and the novelty of the scenes described, have been popular in England, and, it is said, with German readers.

WILLIAM DEAN HOWELLS, a native of Ohio, has derived many of his scenes from American life as found among the well-to-do and intelligent classes. He is remarkable for the finish of his style and its easy flow, and the delicate manner in which he delineates scenes that every one in the same state of society recognises as true to nature. *Their Wedding Journey*, *A Chance Acquaintance*, *Venetian Life*, and many other books, are among his writings. As an editor he is equally successful, while the moral tone of his writings is elevating.

Two authors—JULIAN HAWTHORNE and HENRY JAMES, Jr.—bid fair as writers to sustain the reputations of their fathers. Both are careful and conscientious in their works, and compose them with literary skill. Hawthorne has written *Garth* and other stories, also *Saxon Studies;* and James, *Watch and Ward*, *The American*, *The Europeans*, *Daisy Miller*, *Portrait of a Lady*, and others. The latter is a frequent contributor to American periodicals.

EDWARD EVERETT HALE is the author of numerous stories, marked by the excellence of their plots and style. *A Man without a Country* exerted a good influence in favour of the Union in the time of the Civil War. He also wrote *Philip Nolan's Friends*, and *Ten Times One is Ten.*

THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON has treated of home scenes in his *Out-door Papers*, and other sketches; *Atlantic Essays*, and a *Young Folks' History of the United States.*

WILLIAM MUMFORD BAKER, of Texas, educated as a clergyman of the Presbyterian Church, has occupied a new field in his descriptions of the state of society in that section of the Union. His lifelike characters and their novelty have made his books very attractive, and, as true illustrations, they have been received with great favour. *The New Timothy*, *Mose Evans*, *The Virginians in Texas*, and others, are among the productions of his pen.

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER is a remarkably pleasing writer. Like the red thread in the British naval cordage, an unconscious humour runs through all his writings; this makes them very attractive. His *My Summer in a Garden* was received with great favour. This was followed by others, such as sketches of travels on this continent and in the East. He enters fully into the boys' life in his *Being a Boy*.

23. **Female Writers.**—Space suggests only a mention of the progress in poetry by a host of female writers, as at present the great majority of poems written are by women. These are found in the newspapers and periodicals, and we hail them as harbingers of a bright future. Women also furnish, almost without number, short and graceful stories, the moral influence of which is excellent. This is their field; that of history has been occupied, if not quite exhausted; the scientific appropriately belongs to those who have qualified themselves by the laborious study of years. Woman may revel occasionally in theoretical speculations, but to her sympathetic nature and quick perceptions properly belong the delineations of character as found in domestic and social life; and here she has an opportunity of doing good, and by her influence raising the standard of correct thought and literary excellence.

Mrs. ADELINE D. T. WHITNEY is happy in delineating girlhood, as in her *Leslie Goldthwaite*. This has been followed by other stories in the same strain,

and all of a high moral tone, such as *Real Folks*, *Faith Gartner's Girlhood*, and *Sights and Insights.*

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT is remarkably popular as an author of juvenile books. She is at home in this class of writing, while there is lurking in her mind a power that may one day assert itself still more. Her *Little Women* was by no means confined in its great popularity to juveniles.

ELIZABETH STUART PHELPS stands forth alone, displaying a power very unusual. She has published a number of books, all stamped with an originality of thought and forms of expression; among these *The Gates Ajar* attracted at one time much attention; but by far her most powerful story is *Avis*, describing the struggles of a noble woman.

Mrs. HARRIET PRESCOTT SPOFFORD is the author of several novels of high character on account of the style in which they are written, such as *Sir Rohan's Ghost* and *New England Legends.*

Mrs. FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT wrote the story *That Lass o' Lowrie's.* Though having written previously a number of short and pleasant stories, this book attracted unusual attention as an earnest of what the author could do. Her recent stories are *The Haworths* and *Through One Administration.*

24. **Fiction for a Purpose.**—There is another branch of literature worthy of notice, not only for its excellence in its sphere, but for its good moral influence—that of books in the form of fiction to inculcate proper religious sentiment; among these writers EDWARD PAYSON ROE is prominent, whose various novels have attained a decided popularity. He has written *Barriers Burned Away*, *The Knight of the Nineteenth Century*, *Without a Home*, and many others.

Mrs. ELIZABETH PRENTISS, with pure Christian love, cultivated this field for a number of years, and led many "stepping heavenward." She was the author of numerous books for children and youth, and

others of a more advanced grade. *Stepping Heavenward* has been her most useful book, having great popularity both in this country and in England. Having been translated into German and French, it is read much upon the Continent.

The sisters SUSAN and ANNA WARNER have also laboured successfully. Commencing with *The Wide, Wide World*, they have continued to write many others.

Nor should we neglect to notice the literature that has grown up within the last third of a century, among all denominations of Christians, known as *Sunday-school*, and the continuation of the same in moral stories for youth more advanced.

25. **Theological and Biblical Writers.**—In theology and Biblical learning American scholars have taken a high position. Professor CHARLES HODGE, of the Presbyterian Seminary at Princeton, published the *Systematic Theology*—the labour of half a century—a work matured and sent forth without an equal.

Professor EDWARD ROBINSON, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York City, published the *Biblical Researches*, the result of two personal visits to the Holy Land, and an examination, more thorough than ever before, of its antiquities, and of the places mentioned in the Bible. This became at once a standard work. It turned the attention of the religious world still more to the subjects of Biblical interpretation.

In this department Professor ADDISON ALEXANDER, of Princeton, stands among the first. Rev. ALBERT BARNES also wrote expositions on many books of the Scriptures, especially designed to aid those instructing others. Dr. PHILLIP SCHAFF has accomplished much for the cause in editing *Lange's Commentary* on the whole Bible. Professor W. G. T. SHEDD wrote a *History of Christian Doctrine*.

In other departments collateral with Biblical learning Professor TAYLER LEWIS, of Union College, wrote *Science and the Bible;* President JAMES MCCOSH has written *The Laws of Discursive Thought* and *Christianity and Positivism;* President MARK HOPKINS, of Williams, *Evidences of Christianity* and *The Law of Love;* President FRANCIS WAYLAND, of Brown University, wrote *Moral Science;* Dr. WILLIAM R. ALGER wrote the *History of the Doctrine of the Future Life;* J. W. DAWSON, LL. D., wrote on *Nature and the Bible;* Dr. ANDREW P. PEABODY, on *Christianity and Science;* Professor THOMAS C. UPHAM, of Bowdoin, published the *Elements of Mental Philosophy;* and President NOAH PORTER, of Yale, an elaborate work on *The Human Intellect.*

26. **Church Histories.**—Dr. ABEL STEVENS has written a full *History of the Methodist Church;* Professor CHARLES HODGE and Dr. E. H. GILLETT a *History of the Presbyterian Church,* the latter also wrote a standard work on the *Life and Times of John Huss;* Dr. HENRY M. DEXTER has written the *History of Congregationalism;* Rev. Dr. PERRY, Bishop of Iowa, a *History of the Episcopalians;* and Dr. ROBERT BAIRD, *Religion in America.*

27. **Jurisprudence.**—Chancellor JAMES KENT wrote *Commentaries on American Law;* Justice JOSEPH STORY, on the *Constitution of the United States;* Professor HENRY WHEATON, on *International Law;* ex-President THEODORE D. WOOLSEY has also written on *International Law.* These works are all standard on the subjects of which they treat.

28. **Other Authors.**—EDGAR ALLAN POE holds a peculiar place in our literature. A man of melancholy temperament, and leading a sad and wayward life, yet his poetry was so original in its construction, and so melodious in its rhythm, as to induce many in that respect to imitate him. He is best known by his poem *The Raven.* RICHARD

H. DANA wrote both poetry and prose; of the former, *The Buccaneer* is deemed his best. NATHANIEL PARKER WILLIS wrote a number of poems on scriptural subjects; these are deemed by many the best he has written. PAUL H. HAYNE, of Georgia, and HENRY TIMROD, of South Carolina, are noted—the former as a sonneteer, the latter for his war-songs. GEORGE TICKNOR wrote a standard work on Spanish literature, and biographies. GEORGE S. HILLARD is noted for the refined taste, purity of style, and high-toned moral sentiment in his writings, which consist mainly of orations, discourses, or essays.

We have the philological works of WILLIAM D. WHITNEY, GEORGE P. MARSH, S. S. HALDERMAN; on political economy, the writings of Dr. WAYLAND, HENRY C. CAREY, Professor PERRY, of Williams, and Professor BOWEN, of Harvard; on scientific subjects, JOSEPH HENRY, of the Smithsonian Institution, JOHN W. DRAPER, LOUIS AGASSIZ, MATTHEW F. MAURY, and ARNOLD GUYOT; on geology, EDWARD HITCHCOCK, JAMES DWIGHT DANA, J. S. NEWBERRY, and JOSEPH LE CONTE; on botany, JOHN TORREY and ASA GRAY—but we must stop somewhere. Out of more than *four hundred and fifty* recorded names of authors who have aided in creating an American literature, very many worthy ones must be omitted in a short compendium.

29. **The Outlook.**—There is no more cheering feature for the American literature of the future than the indications of a free and untrammelled spirit in taking subjects from our own life and the scenery of our own land. Still more important will be the influence upon the people themselves, in turning their attention to their own country, and in their learning to appreciate it the more. We have not many traditions to weave into stories, but we have Nature in her freshness and beauty, and a pure domestic life moulded by freedom of thought.

QUESTIONS.

CHAPTER I.

Sections 1, 2.

1. About what period does English literature begin?
2. Why may the English be proud of their literature?
3. Whence did the English come to Britain? Give an account of the struggles between them and the natives.
4. What became of the literature of the native Britons?
5. To which belongs the tale of *King Arthur?*
6. Explain in what respect the earliest English tongue differed from the modern. Give the illustration.

Sections 4—7.

1. In what manner was Old English poetry written?
2. What is said of the length of lines? Explain alliteration and accent.
3. Give examples of archaic forms.
4. Explain the parallelisms. When and how did a French system creep in?
5. Give a summary of the changes made.
6. What are the characteristics of the Continental poetry?
7. What is said of the *Song of the Traveller*, *Deor's Complaint*, and *Fight at Finnesburg?*
8. Describe the Old English epic, *Beowulf*. Give its story.
9. Explain wherein lies its social interest; its poetic force.
10. How does its spirit appear in modern poetry?
11. Quote the description of the dwelling-place of Grendel.

Sections 7—10.

1. In what manner did Christianity modify English poetry?
2. How does the love of domestic life and of nature manifest itself?
3. What does Cædmon tell of Christian heroes?
4. Describe how the spirit of *Woden* was softened by that of *Christ*.
5. Cædmon's poem proves what? Who was Cædmon?
6. Tell the story of his life; of his vision and his song.
7. About what time was the poem written? What were his surroundings?
8. Explain the poem; show why it was a paraphrase, and of what?

9. Point out the portions of the poem that contain the elements of poetry.

10. What parts exhibit dramatic power? How does he compare with Milton?

11. Name the characteristics of English poetry from this time onward.

12. Tell the story of Aldhelm and his songs; his songs to the traders.

13. Give a summary of the poem *Judith;* what are its characteristics.

Sections 11, 12.

1. What was the character of the poems of Cynewulf?
2. Name and describe his lyric pieces; also his religious poems.
3. Describe the translations in the Exeter and Vercelli books.
4. Does their spirit in faith go beyond the grave?
5. Were war songs written in the monasteries?
6. Name the two war songs of that period, and their counterparts in modern times; name the authors of the latter.
7. Describe the fight of Æthelstan and Anlaf.
8. Give the story of the death of Brihtnoth.
9. Why is the poem so English?
10. Explain why English war poetry for a time decayed; what victory was won?

Sections 13—16.

1. At what date and with whom does all *English* prose begin?
2. Name the subjects on which Bæda wrote, and his translation.
3. Tell the incidents of his death.
4. What invasion interfered with this literature in Northumbria; and why?
5. Describe the influence of Ælfred the Great on English literature.
6. How did he promote learning?
7. Mention the works he gave to the nation.
8. Who after Ælfred continued English schools and had translations made?
9. Name the first translator of a portion of the Bible.
10. How was this revival of literature cherished, and under whom revived?
11. Describe the *English Chronicle;* how long did it last?
12. What did it record, and what were its characteristics?
13. In whose reign did English poetry revive? and in whose did English prose?

CHAPTER II., p. 22.

Sections 17, 18.

1. Name the length of time covered by this chapter.
2. What effect on the English had the invasions of the Danes and the Normans?
3. Give the reasons why the English absorbed the invaders.
4. Why did the Normans ally themselves with the English against foreigners?

5. What was the effect on the English tongue ?
6. What is said of the *Moral Ode* and the sayings of Ælfred ?
7. By what two works is the continuity of the English language at this time proved ?
8. Under what three forms did English literature revive ? and in whose reign ?
9. Explain why French literature influenced English poetry and not its prose.
10. Into what classes did this poetical literature divide itself ?
11. Between what two periods did religious poetry excel ?
12. What influenced English story-telling poetry to become the poetry of the Court ?
13. What did Chaucer write that shows him the best example of story-telling ?
14. Describe the two struggles. What did England win ?
15. How are we to trace the process of the change ?

Sections 19, 20.

1. Through whom was England's civilization increased ?
2. Explain the influence of foreign nobles and monks upon the religious life of the people.
3. What desire grew out of this influence ?
4. Describe Ormin's *Ormulum*. What does it mark ?
5. What is said of his ideal monk ?
6. Designate the pieces that bring religious poetry to the year 1300.
7. Explain how the Normans and English were drawn more closely together.
8. Show what class of books or poems were written.
9. Name the translations made, and who by ?
10. *Cursor Mundi:* what its character, and its contents ?
11. What prose work was translated ; what poem was written for the unlearned ?
12. Describe the vision of *Piers the Plowman*. For what does he plead ?

Sections 21, 22.

1. What literary taste was brought into England by the Normans ?
2. How were its writers styled ?
3. Show in what respect these writings were changed in character.
4. On what subjects did they write ?
5. Who was the first writer, who the last, and what the time intervening ?
6. When did historical literature again rise, and through whom ?
7. What change of feeling took place among the Normans, and how were they interested in English literature ?
8. Describe the influence of this welding of the two people together.
9. Give the substance of the stories told by the Welsh priest.
10. How were they received ? Tell what grew out of them.
11. Compare them with *Idylls of the King*.
12. Tell the story of these legends coming back to England.

Sections 23—25.

1. Describe Layamon's *Brut*. What does he say of himself?
2. In what measure is it written? How does it show change of language?
3. Name the stories translated from the French into the English.
4. In what did story-telling become French in form?
5. How long before the romantic poetry became naturalized? Under what circumstances?
6. What is meant by the Cycles of Romance?
7. Tell how *King Arthur* and the *Round Table* obtained their place in English literature.
8. Give an account of *Charlemagne and his twelve peers*.
9. Explain the romantic fictions about Eskander.
10. Show how the fourth romantic story came to be introduced into English literature.
11. What other romances grew out of the taste thus formed?
12. In what two writers does the influence of this French school show itself?
13. In what translation did it come to its height?

Sections 26—29.

1. Describe English lyrics, idylls, and ballads. Tell the story of Robin Hood.
2. Give an outline of the idyll the *Owl and Nightingale*.
3. With what were these tinged?
4. Give the substance of the satirical poem mentioned.
5. What is said of political ballads and war songs?
6. Explain the struggles of the literary English language.
7. When was English made the language of the courts of law?
8. Show how the Friars brought so many French words into the language.
9. What is said of the older inflections, prefixes, and endings?
10. Give an account of the East Midland dialect, and its influence.
11. What effect had the universities on the language?
12. What is said of Wiclif's translation?
13. Name the two authors who "fixed the language" in a clear form.
14. Why was it called the "King's English"?
15. Give the *contrast* between Wiclif and Langland.
16. Explain the religious revival; the influence of the Friars.
17. Name another influence. Give the discussion on equal rights.
18. Enumerate the causes that brought misery upon the people.

Sections 30—33.

1. Who wrote *Piers the Plowman*? How does he describe himself?
2. Give an account of his vision; its characters and their significance.
3. Explain how he seeks a righteous life; and his allegories.
4. Describe the influence that his books exerted.

5. What translation did much to "fix" our language?
6. When accused, in what language did he defend himself?
7. What is said of his active life?
8. To what year does this work come?
9. Describe John Gower's influence as a story-teller.
10. In what three languages were his books written? What does that indicate?
11. Give a summary of what he taught in his English book.
12. Relate the incident with Richard II.

Sections 34—39.

1. Give a sketch of Chaucer's life.
2. Under what influence were his first two books written?
3. Explain the Italian influence on his poetry.
4. What was the condition of Italian poetry at the time?
5. Whose tales did he read and translate?
6. Notice the character of the changes he made in his translations.
7. Give a summary of the stories he wrote.
8. Describe Chaucer's characters.
9. State his definition of a gentleman. Note his love of Nature.
10. Give an outline of the *Canterbury Tales.*
11. What were pilgrimages in those days?
12. Of what do the *Tales* treat?
13. To what are his story and verse compared?
14. What elements did he weave into his English?
15. State the comparison drawn between Chaucer and Gower.
16. Where in literature does Sir John Mandeville belong?

CHAPTER III., p. 50.

Sections 40—43.

1. To what point of time do Chaucer and Langland bring us?
2. What is said of Chaucer's influence?
3. Give a summary of the poems and other writings of John Lydgate.
4. Notice the *minor poets* of the period.
5. What is said in respect to ballads and small poems?
6. Name the ballads sung by minstrels, and still known and found in books.

Sections 44—46.

1. Describe the controversy carried on by Pecock, Bishop of Chichester.
2. Name the first theologian who wrote in English.
3. What are the titles and character of the books written by Sir John Fortescue and Sir Thomas Malory?
4. Who was Caxton? Give the title of the first book he printed.
5. What effect was produced on the English language by his translations?
6. Give a summary of the influence of Caxton's publications.
7. State the effect of the interest taken in classical literature.

8. Describe the *Paston Letters*.
9. What interest in books and libraries did some of the nobles take?
10. Name the classics translated.
11. Explain the effect on the English of the revival of letters in Italy.
12. By what means did the *New Learning* increase in England?

Sections 47, 48.

1. Show the influence of Henry VIII. on prose literature.
2. Trace the influence of Erasmus and Sir Thomas More.
3. What is said of *English Renaissance?*
4. Give an account of Roger Ascham's endeavors.
5. What is said of Tyndale and his translation of the Bible?
6. Give a summary of the editions. Show the effect on the language.
7. How did his translation reach America?
8. What was accomplished by Cranmer and Latimer?

Sections 49—51.

1. Sketch the transition period from the old poets.
2. Describe the *Pastime of Pleasure* by Stephen Hawes.
3. What is said of the writings of John Skelton? His satire on Wolsey?
4. What does he write against in *Colin Clout?*
5. Give an account of his other writings, and their influence.
6. Explain his position in the transition.
7. Define the Scottish poetry of the period.
8. Give the outlines of Old Northumbria, and its history.
9. Account for the peculiarities of Scottish poetry.
10. Name and define its three characteristics.

Sections 52—54.

1. Compare the patriotism of the English and that of the Scotch. Show the influence.
2. Account for the individuality of Scottish poetry.
3. Describe *The Bruce*. Give the story of James I. of Scotland and his writings.
4. What is said of Robert Henryson's poems? Whom did he imitate?
5. What influence did William Dunbar exert? Show how.
6. Name the translations of Gawin Douglas; describe his writings.
7. Explain how Sir David Lyndsay was a poet and reformer.
8. Describe his *Satire of the Three Estates*. Show his influence.

Section 55.

1. By whom was the Italian influence revived? in whose reign?
2. What was the effect upon the English poets?
3. Give an outline of the poems of the "*Amourists*."

4. What is said of this style of verse?
5. What retarded the new impulse?
6. Name the period of English literature about to be ushered in.

CHAPTER IV., p. 71.

Sections 56—59.

1. Enumerate the influences that led to the Elizabethan literature.
2. Give a summary of the *first* Elizabethan period. 1. Prose. 2. Poetry. 3. Translations. 4. Theological reform. 5. Histories. 6. English tales. 7. Pageants and plays, how conducted. 8. Stories of voyagers. 9. Other writers.
3. Give an account of the literature of the *second* period.
4. Describe John Lyly's *Euphues;* its contents and style; its influence.
5. What is said of Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*, and of the man himself?
6. The *Arte of Poesie;* why written?
7. Name the other books on the subject. State their influence.

Sections 60—63.

1. Why was the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* written? What are its merits?
2. Describe Lord Bacon's *Essays*.
3. Tell of Hakluyt's voyages, etc.
4. Trace the origin of English fiction.
5. Give a sketch of Edmund Spenser, his youth and manhood.
6. Notice the characteristics of the *Shepheardes Calender*.
7. Give an outline of the contents of the *Faerie Queen*. What is the number of its parts?
8. Explain its influence on English poetry.
9. Name and describe Spenser's minor poems. What is said of his later life?

Sections 64—67.

1. Name the four prominent translators and their respective works.
2. Tell of the influence of Italy, of Greece, and of France.
3. Give in order a sketch of Elizabethan poetry, and show how it reflected the whole of English life.
4. What is the character of Southwell's poems?
5. Give a summary of the *love poetry* of the time.
6. What is stated of William Drummond?
7. Explain how patriotic poets arose in England, and their influence.
8. Name the three chief poets of this class.
9. Describe *Albion's England*, and the subjects treated.
10. Give an outline of *Polyolbion*.
11. What changed the tone of this poetry?
12. Mention the causes that mark the change.

Sections 68—74.

1. Explain why the drama in England began in religion.
2. Give the subjects of these plays in their order.
3. Describe a "Miracle Play." What were "Mystery" representations?
4. Explain what was intended to be taught in "the Morality."
5. How is the transition traced from religious plays to the regular drama?
6. Tell of John Heywood. Describe his *Interludes;* what grew out of them?
7. Name the sources from which these dramas were derived.
8. Give a description of the first theatre and its accompaniments.
9. In what metres were the plays written?
10. What was the number of the plays produced, and of the songs in them?
11. Give a summary of what was done by Lyly, Peele, Greene, and Marlowe.
12. What were the characteristics of these dramas?
13. Describe the strange contrasts existing at the time.

Sections 75—80.

1. Give a sketch of Shakespeare; his domestic life; how he became a playwright.
2. What is the theory in respect to his first play? when written?
3. Trace his progress from "touching up" old plays till the time he composed them himself.
4. Mention his first three plays; give their peculiar features.
5. State what is said of his historical plays.
6. Name the plays written during his *second* period.
7. What change came into his writings?
8. With whom was he popular, and in what respect?
9. Under what circumstances did he write *Hamlet*, and other plays of his *third* period.
10. Give a reason why in these he depicts the "darker sins of men."
11. Give a sketch of his last plays; with what spirit were they written?
12. Give a summary of his work. Explain the Epilogue to *The Tempest*.
13. How is it visible how he was influenced?

Sections 81—85.

1. In what respect did the drama decay?
2. What is the character of the plays of Ben Jonson?
3. What phase of human nature did they delineate?
4. Enumerate the plays he wrote.
5. In what manner were the *Masques* written?
6. When did they attain their highest popularity?
7. Give the traits of Beaumont and Fletcher as writers.
8. Describe Massinger as a writer. To what extremes did he go?

9. Mention what is said of John Webster's manner of expression.
10. Who was the last of the Elizabethan dramatists?
11. Give an account of the strolling players.
12. With what "opera" began the new drama?

CHAPTER V., p. 108.

Sections 86—89.

1. Describe the change in prose literature after Elizabeth's death.
2. In what consisted the new type of poetry?
3. The *Advancement of Learning*; what impulse did it give?
4. What good work had science done?
5. Mention the historical literature of the time.
6. What is said of Sir Walter Raleigh? and other historians?
7. Name what subjects miscellaneous literature touched upon.
8. Give an account of the religious literature.
9. What is said of the founding of libraries?
10. Of theology—as represented by Jeremy Taylor and Richard Baxter; Chillingworth and John Milton?
11. Describe the style of writing during this time.

Sections 90—95.

1. Name the element that pervaded the poetry at the time.
2. When did this spirit become less? Give the illustration.
3. Explain in what manner the fantastic style grew up.
4. Describe the lyric poetry during the Civil War.
5. Of what did the songs and epigrams treat? When did they change?
6. Give a sketch of the satirical poetry of this period.
7. Explain how pastoral poetry arose.
8. Contrast rural with town poetry.
9. What is said of the imitation of Spenser by certain writers?
10. Describe the religious poetry of George Herbert and Henry Vaughan.
11. Name the other poets; some Roman Catholic and some Puritan.
12. What is said of the position of John Dryden?

Sections 96—101.

1. John Milton. Describe his youth; his university life; his studies at Horton.
2. When did he visit Italy? Why did he return to England?
3. Why did he write scarcely any poetry for twenty years?
4. Give an account of his controversial pamphlets and their influence.
5. What are the leading characteristics of *Paradise Lost?*
6. Explain the beauty of the poem; its ideal purity; the degradation of Satan; and the sad image in the closing lines.
7. *Paradise Regained.* What are its characteristics?
8. What the teaching in *Samson Agonistes?*
9. Point out the traits of mind that Milton exemplifies.

10. Give a summary of Milton's poetic force and taste.
11. *Pilgrim's Progress.* What is its spirit, and of what does it treat?
12. Account for this book still living in literature.
13. Why is it the language of the English people?

CHAPTER VI., p. 123.

Sections 102—104.

1. Explain the change that occurred in the style of poetry.
2. Why do certain poets write in a natural style?
3. When national life grows chill, what effect is produced?
4. Account for Milton's influence on style.
5. Describe the other influences mentioned.
6. The Elizabethan poets wrote on what subject? How was it treated?
7. How did Dryden and Pope treat man?
8. Give an account of the transition poets. What new interest was rising?
9. Contrast the two famous satires of this period. Describe each.

Sections 105—107.

1. Explain how Dryden became the introducer of a new school of poetry.
2. In what way is his change of opinions accounted for?
3. Give an epitome of his satire of *Absalom and Ahitophel;* of the *Hind and Panther;* and of his *Religio Laici.*
4. What is said of his fables and translations?
5. The influence of Bishop Ken, how used?
6. Name the society founded; give a summary of the sciences it was designed to promote.
7. Mention the discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton.
8. To what kind of knowledge was the intellectual inquiry of the Nation directed? Explain the two sides taken.
9. Give a summary of the theological literature of the period.
10. Mention the names of the preachers and writers in the controversy in relation to Atheism and Deism.

Sections 108—110.

1. Give an outline of the discussion on the science of government and social questions.
2. From what point did Hobbes discuss these questions?
3. State the positions maintained in his *Leviathan.*
4. Give an outline of the arguments on both sides.
5. What science was for the first time partially treated?
6. John Locke. State his three positions in his *Civil Government.*
7. How did he carry the same spirit into another realm of thought?
8. What is said of his *Essay on the Human Understanding?*
9. Sketch the miscellaneous literature of the time.
10. Name the authors; describe the essays, letter-writing, etc.

Sections 111—114.

1. Give an account of the literature known as that of Queen Anne and the first Georges.
2. What opinions gave rise to it, and where was it concentrated?
3. Who were the Whigs and who the Tories?
4. Describe this party literature, and its effect upon pure literature.
5. Name the subjects discussed; what was the influence on the style of English prose?
6. Alexander Pope. Give a sketch of his life and a summary of his writings; their design and effect.
7. Describe the *Moral Essays*, the *Essay on Man*, the *Satires*, and the *Epistles*.
8. What is said of his translations, and his love of literature?
9. Of the minor poets what is said? Give a summary of their songs and ballads.
10. What impulse rang the knell of criticism?

Sections 115—118.

1. Give the four great names in prose literature at this time.
2. What is said of each one and his writings?
3. Describe Bishop Butler's great work.
4. Metaphysical literature. The *Minute Philosopher;* what did it teach?
5. The *Fable of the Bees;* tried to prove what?
6. Periodical essays; their design? Of what did the *Tatler* treat?
7. What is said of the *Spectator?* The *Guardian?*
8. Their influence on the people? Who were the principal writers?
9. In the drama, what new form was introduced?
10. From whom did the dramatic writers sometimes borrow?
11. What is said of the influence of Dryden on the drama?
12. In what form did the dramatists succeed?
13. How was the drama partially purified?
14. Of what was the stage made a vehicle?
15. How long did the influence of the Restoration on the drama last?
16. With whom does the elder English drama close?

CHAPTER VII., p. 145.

Sections 119—121.

1. With the rapid increase of what is paralleled the growth of literature?
2. Give the four causes of this literary progress.
3. What is said of the effect of a good style? And also of the *long peace?*
4. Show the influence of the Press on the literature of the period.
5. What right did the Press claim and obtain?

[Note: The freedom of the Press was established in New York

thirty-seven years before this. See Patton's "Concise History of the American People," p. 221.]

6. Explain the influence on English literature of French authors and German writers.

7. Tell the story of Samuel Johnson.

8. Give an account of his writings, and show their influence.

9. What is said of Oliver Goldsmith, Edmund Burke, and Sir Joshua Reynolds?

10. Who originated the modern novel? Define the novel.

11. What field does it occupy for its subjects?

12. Give the characteristics of each of these authors.

Sections 122, 123.

1. Mention the first three prominent English historians.

2. Give the titles of their histories, and the characteristic of each as to style.

3. Name in order the merits and defects of each.

4. Explain David Hume's theory of philosophy.

5. Define what he means by his measure of virtue, and the influence of the theory.

6. Name his works in their order; what may be inferred from the last two?

7. Give the theory of the *Wealth of Nations*. What questions were involved?

8. Enumerate the effects of industry from 1720 to 1770.

9. Give an account of the *Social Reform;* its influence on literature and on popular education.

10. What are the characteristics of Edmund Burke's speeches and writings?

11. Show their literary merits and defects; account for their influence.

Sections 124—129.

1. What city had become a literary centre?

2. State the effects of the doctrines of the French Revolution.

3. Explain the influence of the great journals.

4. Give a summary of the means used to educate the people.

5. Name the *Reviews* and *Magazines;* tell how they grew up.

6. What made them a power?

7. What literature received an impulse from the Wesleys and George Whitfield?

8. Name the writers on the evidences of Christianity.

9. Mention the names of the Scotch mental philosophers.

10. What was the influence of *Aids to Reflection?*

11. What was put forth by Jeremy Bentham?

12. Give what is said on books of travel.

13. Explain the position of historical literature.

14. Sum up what is said of the novel of this period.

15. Give a sketch of each of Walter Scott's novels.

CHAPTER VIII., p. 158.

Sections 130—133.

1. Give an outline of the *two periods* of poetry to be studied.
2. State the influence of didactic and satirical poetry.
3. Show the effect of the Greek and Latin classics in forming a more artistic poetry.
4. What was the result of a careful study of the older English authors?
5. State the new element introduced; give examples of the narrative, ballad, and romance.
6. Cite Ossian and Chatterton.
7. What reaction took place, and how?
8. Give the criticism on the style of poetry from Elizabeth to George I.
9. On what two subjects have poets always worked?
10. Explain how man in connection with Nature furnishes subjects to the poets.
11. Account for the change to natural description.
12. Describe Thomson's *Seasons;* what was its influence?
13. How did descriptions of natural scenery come to be interwoven with reflections on human life?
14. What influence had foreign travel on the love of Nature?
15. Instance Goldsmith and Collins.
16. What is said of the *Minstrel?* What does the story resemble?

Sections 134—138.

1. State how a change of subject began; the individual man.
2. Mention the various ways in which the poor were introduced into poetry.
3. Give the titles of poems bearing on man as a subject.
4. Scottish poetry; describe the *Gentle Shepherd.*
5. State what is said of the ballad in Scotland.
6. Name the three poets of the *second period* of the new poetry.
7. State the features of William Blake's poetry.
8. Describe Cowper's poems. What element did he introduce?
9. What are the links that connect him with different periods of poetry?
10. How did he regard the brotherhood of man?
11. This led to poems on what questions?
12. Give a summary of the wonderful change.
13. How are we brought face to face with the pictures of life in the poems of Crabbe?
14. Compare him with Cowper.
15. Describe the *Farmer's Boy* and the *Rural Tales;* what was the influence of this style of poetry?
16. Who afterward took it up and added new features?

Sections 139, 140.

1. Name the element restored to poetry by Robert Burns.
2. Why did he sing of the poor? Notice the dates of the three poets.

3. Account for human sympathy leading these three poets to have tenderness for animals.
4. State what is specially marked in Burns.
5. What spoiled his life?
6. What is said of the ideas brought into view by the French Revolution in respect to man?
7. Explain the influence of these ideas of man's equality, and the reaction upon Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, and Walter Scott.

Sections 141—144.

1. What is said of Southey? What of Coleridge?
2. Mention the influence on the latter of the defection of France.
3. Name the principal poems of Southey.
4. State the opinion in respect to the beauty of Coleridge's poetry.
5. Describe Wordsworth's youth and training.
6. In what way were the *lyrical ballads* published?
7. What is said of the *Prelude* and the *Excursion*?
8. How in accordance with his views was Nature in harmony with man?
9. Account for his minute observation of Nature.
10. Show how he came to honor man as a part of the being of Nature.
11. State his disappointment; his hatred of oppression.
12. Give the subjects of a series of his sonnets.
13. Account for his being truly a poet of mankind.
14. State what criticism must confess. Wherein is he like Milton?

Sections 145—147.

1. Mention the three famous narrative poems of Walter Scott.
2. What is said of his lyrics? Describe how he represents landscape in his word-painting.
3. Analyze Campbell's *Pleasures of Hope*. What are his prominent poems?
4. Describe the *Pleasures of Memory*.
5. Why is there no trace of the civil commotions of Europe found in the poetry of Rogers?
6. What are the characteristics of the poetry of Thomas Moore?
7. Name the underlying subject of his songs.

Sections 148—150.

1. Who were the post-revolution poets?
2. What is said of *Childe Harold* and other poems of Byron?
3. Give an analysis of his dramas, and of his life.
4. For what purpose did he seem to write narrative poetry? Describe Cain.
5. Why did he write in opposition to social morality?
6. Describe him as a poet of Nature.
7. Analyze his great power.
8. What is the prominent idea in Shelley's *Queen Mab*?
9. Explain the poem *Alastor*.
10. What are the sentiments expressed in the *Revolt of Islam*?

11. Explain why his poetry became more masculine.
12. What is represented in *Prometheus Unbound?* State its ideas.
13. Describe the *Cenci* and *Adonais*.
14. How does Shelley's view of Nature compare with that of Wordsworth?
15. What was the character of his later poetry?

Sections 151, 152.

1. Draw a parallel between Shelley and Keats.
2. For what reason did Keats go to Greek and mediæval life for subjects?
3. Describe his style. What does he mark in *modern* English poetry?
4. Of what impulse does Keats mark the exhaustion?
5. Tell why indifferent thought was expressed in pleasant verse.
6. State the effect of the reform agitation, and the religious movement at Oxford.
7. What is said of Mr. and Mrs. Browning?
8. Give the characteristics of the former's sympathies.
9. What is said of Tennyson's *Idylls?*
10. Describe the new class of literary poets.
11. Compare in time Tennyson's *Harold* (1877) with Cædmon's Paraphrase (about 670).

QUESTIONS.

CHAPTER IX.

Sections 1, 2.

1. Upon what depends the success of literature?
2. What its theory, and should be its influence?
3. Name the advantages the colonists brought with them. To what did these lead?
4. When were public schools established? What instance does it mark?
5. Describe the practice, and state the result.
6. How was the literature of the Colonial period influenced?
7. Explain why that literature had little effect on the present.

Sections 3—5.

1. Give an account of Jonathan Edwards. Name the books he wrote.
2. What is said of the last one mentioned?
3. On what literature has his influence been marked?
4. Name the works of Timothy Dwight. How written. What their influence.
5. Give the story of Benjamin Franklin.
6. State his efforts in behalf of education, economy, and literature.
7. Explain how he showed his practical wisdom.

Sections 6—8.

1. State how a change took place in the literature of that period.
2. Name those who took part in these discussions.
3. What is the character of their writings, and those of George Washington?
4. Give an account of the *Federalist*. How did it accomplish its work?
5. Explain why newspapers and journalists increased in numbers.
6. How long did the influence of the latter continue?
7. State what the American writers of this period did for themselves.
8. Why did the people begin to read more on general subjects?

Sections 9, 10.

1. Who was the harbinger in the field of American romance?
2. Describe him as an author. What the character of his writings?

3. He was the first American author to do what?
4. Who followed in this field? With what success?
5. What elaborate work did he also write?
6. Why were Cooper's novels so popular?
7. Who stands preëminent in American literature?
8. In what consists the charm of Irving's writings?
9. Give a summary of his works.
10. Who, as writers, were Irving's contemporaries?
11. After what was the *Salmagundi* modelled?
12. Name the chief work of Drake and its characteristic.

Sections 11, 12.

1. Explain the cause of different theological opinions.
2. Describe the noted controversy. Where was its centre?
3. Give a sketch of Channing.
4. What organs were established? What is said of their readers?
5. Name the other parties drawn into this controversy.
6. In what two respects is our historical literature noted?
7. Name the authors who treat of foreign countries. Give a summary of their works.
8. Name the authors of United States histories. What period do they cover?
9. What is said of the school histories and one other?
10. Give a summary of Jared Sparks's writings.

Section 13.

1. In what respect can we compare the poetry of America with that of England?
2. Describe the characteristics of the poetry of Bryant.
3. What translations has he made?
4. State the literary career of Longfellow.
5. What desirable qualities are found in his writings?
6. Explain the popularity of his works.
7. How has Whittier been characterised? What the influence of his poetry?
8. Give a sketch of the two writers—Holmes and Lowell.
9. Name their writings.

Sections 14—17.

1. What is said of the hosts of writers?
2. Where are the readers found? How do they apply the thoughts of others?
3. Describe the luxury and the result.
4. State how an impulse has been given to literature.
5. Explain the features of these literary times.
6. What is said of woman as a writer?
7. Give a sketch of the literature of the newspaper.
8. Name the advantages derived from the notices of books.
9. State what is said of miscellaneous writers.

Sections 18, 19.

1. Describe the influence of political discussions on literature.
2. Name the men of a brilliant period.
3. Give a summary of the contrast.
4. What is said of the agitation?
5. Explain in what respect our literature is rich.
6. Describe the influence of the essayists.
7. What has been the effect of popular lectures?
8. Name the authors in this class. Their writings.

Section 20.

1. Give a sketch of Hawthorne's style, and name his writings.
2. What is said of Simms's works and of himself?
3. Why was *Uncle Tom's Cabin* so popular?
4. Name Mrs. Stowe's other books.
5. State what is said of Stoddard's literary labours.
6. Name Stedman's writings. Why does he stand high as a critic?
7. Of what kind of writing was the civil war an occasion?
8. Describe Bayard Taylor as an author.
9. Explain the novelty of the writings of Joaquin Miller and Bret Harte.
10. Give a description of J. G. Saxe's poetry.

Section 22.

1. What is said of *Jim Bludso?* How has the author been complimented?
2. State what is said of the stories and poems of T. B. Aldrich.
3. Describe the author of *Sevenoaks* as a writer and editor.
4. What advantage has the author of the *Circuit Rider* in his subjects?
5. Explain the secret of the popularity of his writings.
6. From what class of subjects does Howells derive his scenes?
7. Describe his style and manner. Name his writings.
8. Give an account of the *two authors*. Name their writings.
9. What is said of the writings of E. E. Hale and T. W. Higginson?
10. Give a sketch of W. M. Baker's writings and their subjects.
11. Explain the charm of Charles Dudley Warner's writings.

Sections 23, 24.

1. What is said of female writers? What may be termed their field?
2. Name Mrs. Whitney's writings and Miss Alcott's.
3. State the character of Miss Stuart's style and writings.
4. What is said of Mrs. Spofford and Mrs. Burnett as to their novels?
5. Describe the writings of E. P. Roe and Mrs. Prentiss as to their purpose.
6. What literature has grown up recently?

Sections 25, 26.

1. What is said of Biblical learning and systematic theology?
2. Name the work of Professor Robinson. State its influence.
3. Name those who have engaged in Biblical interpretation.
4. Give the authors and titles of works written as collateral with Biblical learning.
5. Name the authors and their works on Church history.

Sections 27—29.

1. Give the titles of the works on jurisprudence and international law. Name the authors.
2. Upon what other subjects have many American authors written?
3. Give a summary of the outlook.

THE END.

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